Sponsoring Committee: Professor Lee A. Belford
Professor Ellis F. White, and
Professor H. Frederick Kilander

DEACONESSES IN THE UNITED STATES

SINCE 1918

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A Study of the Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church in America in comparison with the Corresponding Programs of the Other Lutheran Churches and of the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, Episcopal, and Methodist Churches

PAUL JOHN KIRSCH

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PREFACE

The present study is concerned with the developments in deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America and in other Lutheran and Protestant denominations in the United States in recent decades. It was conceived in the hope of contributing to the ongoing discussion among the deaconesses and their friends as to the directions in which deaconess work might profitably move in the years ahead.

A large number of deaconesses, friends of deaconess work, and friends of higher education have proved themselves to be good friends also of the investigator's, by giving indispensable help in the course of this study, invariably with the greatest cordiality and generosity.

A grant from the Samuel Trexler Fellowship Fund (the Reverend Charles D. Trexler, chairman) of the United Lutheran Synod of New York and New England made possible visits by the investigator to the headquarters of most of the deaconess establishments described. In the case of every visit he was hospitably received; both the necessary materials and the time to ask questions were made available generously. For all these courtesies, and in many cases for informative correspondence both before and after the visit, the investigator is happy for the opportunity to thank the following: Sister Anna Bergeland, directing sister of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, Minneapolis; Sister Elinor Falk, directing sister, Sister Nanca Schoen, formerly directing sister, and Pastor H. A. Flessner, of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee; Sister Dora Gulbranson, dean of education, and Sister Grace Carlson, directing sister, of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Omaha; Sister Marie Rorem, directing sister of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, Chicago; Dr. Loren Halvorson, director of the Commission on Diaconic Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis; Pastor Arnold F. Krentz, executive director, Pastor Walter C. Gerken, assistant executive director, and Deaconess Marilyn Brammeier, field secretary, of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne; Sister Pauline Becker, field secretary, and Sister Olivia Drusch, director of nursing education and of nursing service, Evangelical Deaconess Hospital, St. Louis; the Reverend Marvin Ewert, administrator, and Sister Lena Mae Smith, directing sister, the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital, Newton, Kansas; Deaconess Edith A. Booth, deaconess-in-charge, and Deaconess Amelia Brereton, assisting deaconess, the Central House for Deaconesses, Evanston, Illinois; and Miss Mary Lou Barnwell, deaconess, executive secretary of the Commission on Deaconess Work, Woman's Division of Christian Service, Board of Missions, The Methodist Church, New York City.

In addition, thanks are due to an administrator and to a deaconess whom it was impossible to visit, but who kindly supplied necessary information through the mail: Pastor Victor E. Bagger of the Eben-Ezer Lutheran Home and Hospital, Brush, Colorado; and Sister Julianne Holt, directing sister of the Bethphage Inner Mission Association, Axtell, Nebraska. Mention must also be made of the kindness of Sister Aasta Foreland, who loaned materials relating to the Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn.

A special measure of thanks must go to two deaconess-administrators of the United Lutheran Church in America, of whom so much more help was asked and who responded with a wealth of material and with generous hospitality: Sister Anna Ebert, directing sister of the Philadelphia Motherhouse, Gladwyne, Pennsylvania; and Sister Mildred Winter, executive secretary of the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church, Philadelphia. Sister Anna Melville, directing sister of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, Baltimore, was gracious in correspondence and in offering assistance.

Dr. F. Eppling Reinartz, secretary of the United Lutheran Church in America, helpfully loaned, without limit of time, a set of the Minutes of the church.

Miss Helen M. Knubel, librarian, made available all the resources of the library of the National Lutheran Council, New York City, imaginatively discovering some sources whose existence the investigator had not suspected. Thanks must also be directed to her assistant, Mrs. Michael Zuk, and to Miss Marete Fogh of the staff of the National Lutheran Council, who interpreted the references to deaconess work in the early Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish minutes of various American Lutheran church bodies.

Grateful acknowledgment is due to Wagner College, Richard H. Heindel, president, for the grant of a sabbatical leave, and to the National Lutheran Educational Conference, Gould Wickey, executive director, for the award of a Martin Luther Fellowship, without which the writing might never have been possible.

A special order of gratitude is owed to Professor Lee A. Belford, chairman of the sponsoring committee, who was not only specifically helpful in every one of countless interviews, but whose continuous encouragement steadily diminished an army of misgivings in the investigator. Professor Ellis F. White and Professor H. Frederick Kilander of the sponsoring committee have helped to improve the thesis substantially with numerous suggestions. Former members of the sponsoring committee: Professor D. Campbell Wyckoff (now of Princeton Theological Seminary), Professor Alonzo Myers (retired), and Professor Dan W. Dodson (on sabbatical leave), all helped in important ways while the outline of the thesis was being developed.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this study is to trace the history of deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America (founded in 1918) in comparison with that of the corresponding programs of the other Lutheran churches and of the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, Episcopal, and Methodist churches in the United States of America, in order to discover insights and patterns that may be useful in the planning of the future of deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America.

I. DELIMITATIONS

The study focuses primarily on deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America. This denomination is the largest of the Lutheran church bodies in the United States and includes within itself the oldest deaconess establishment in America. (It was a Lutheran pastor, Theodore Fliedner, who revived the women's diaconate in the modern Christian church, beginning in 1836 in Kaiserswerth, Germany. It is within what is now the United Lutheran Church in America that the deaconess work was first established in America, in Pittsburgh in 1849.)

The study focuses secondarily on the deaconess work in the other Lutheran churches and in the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, Episcopal, and Methodist churches in the United States. Thus it brings under survey every Christian denomination in America that has a deaconess program.

The study covers the entire time of the existence of the United Lutheran Church in America, that is, from 1918 to the present. The United Lutheran Church in America includes local congregations, organizations of congregations, and deaconess establishments older than itself, since it came into existence through the merger of three previous national and regional church bodies. Nevertheless, to go back to 1918 in the present study is to go back far enough to watch the deaconess movement meet the special challenges of modern American life, typified by the winning of the franchise by American women in 1920 and the demand by women workers for economic and cultural equality of status.

II. SUB-PROBLEMS

In order to facilitate the management of the problem of the study, it was divided into three sub-problems, as follows.

1. To discover the changes in deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America since the organization of the church in 1918 and the reasons for the changes made and the problems it was being proposed to solve, according to the official statements of the responsible parties involved.

2. To compare the developments in deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America in relation to the reasons cited for changes made and the problems it was being proposed to solve, on the one hand, with the developments that have occurred in the other Lutheran churches and in the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, Episcopal, and Methodist churches in the United States in relation to the similar or different reasons for change cited and problems being solved in these churches, on the other hand.

3. To summarize and to indicate the solutions of recognized problems and responses to changed circumstances that seem most likely to hold promise for the future of deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Deaconess. This is a term of Greek origin. *Diakonos* was a general term for "servant" in classical Greek.[1] *Diakonos* as the special term for a recognized type of official ("deacon") emerged in the earliest days of the Christian church and appears in the New Testament.[2] Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was a _diakonos_. _Diakonissa_, a feminine form constructed on the same root, appeared as the special term for a type of woman functionary in the church at a later date and only in ecclesiastical writers.[1] The term "deaconess," as a modern rendering of _diakonissa_, began to be used in the nineteenth century as the title of a new group of women workers in the church, although the occasion is often referred to as the "restoration" of the office of deaconess. In view of the somewhat differing uses of the term by the churches included in this study, "deaconess" can only be defined at this point as referring to a woman worker who, on the basis of a special course of study, has been publicly set apart as a "deaconess" for full-time service in her church.

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[1] H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (seventh edition; New York: Harper and Bros., 1883), p. 348.

[2] I Timothy 3: 8, 12.

Female diaconate. This term, frequently rendered simply as "diaconate," is used by most of the churches under survey in the present study and in the study itself to refer to the office of a deaconess, or to deaconesses collectively, or to the deaconess system, including its personnel, organization, and processes.

Official statements of the responsible parties involved (in making changes in deaconess work). "The responsible parties involved" in the government of the diaconates, and therefore in making changes in deaconess work, are churches and church boards and officials on the one hand and the diaconates' more immediate instruments of government on the other hand, such as boards of trustees, executives, pastors, directing sisters, and sisters' councils. "Official statements of responsible parties involved" in making changes will therefore be resolutions by church governing bodies and reports to church governing bodies by church boards, committees, agencies, and officials concerned with deaconess work and, for the diaconates, statements in official publications and in minutes by the various centers of authority within the diaconates.

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[1] Liddell and Scott, _loc_. _cit_.

IV. BASIC HYPOTHESIS

It was considered to be contributory toward further clarification and definition of the problem being addressed in this study to propose a hypothesis which on the one hand would be tested by the evidence as it was accumulated and on the other hand, so far as it was confirmed, might function as a possible solution of the problem, that is, might point to a line of development holding promise for the future of deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America.

Such a hypothesis was proposed in this form: that the tendency of the changes made in the female diaconate in the United States of America since 1918 is toward professionalizing deaconess work.

There were two ways in which deaconess work could have been professionalized in the last four decades. One way was for a distinctive kind of work performed by deaconesses to achieve professional status; the other was for deaconesses regularly to become members of one or more of the established professions. Any advance toward either kind of professionalization was judged to be relevant to the hypothesis.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

W. A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, in the foreward to the council's Interim Report on the *Life and Work of Women in the Church*,[1] relates how a preliminary study of the role of women in Protestant church life aroused so much interest that the original plan of the study had to be greatly widened. The body of the report indicates that:

> The tendency everywhere is for an increasing amount of full-time, professional service to be rendered by women in pastoral and evangelistic work . . . The crying need in all quarters is for more and better training and in some countries for more opportunities for training of a high standard including more generous admission arrangements and guidance in theological seminaries.[2]

A conference of church women from seventeen countries, called by the World Council of Churches to consider the life and work of women in the church and meeting at Baarn, Holland, in August, 1948, recommended to the World Council that there was particular need for further study and action in respect to "women's place and ministry [in the church] both lay and professional."[1]

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[1] Geneva, 1948, pp. 5-6. [2] *Ibid*., p. 27.

The Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1948, received and "commended to the churches for their serious consideration and appropriate action" a resolution from one of its committees to the effect that:

> 3. Professional Church Workers. In order to secure the services of educated and well-qualified women, with a sense of vocation, for professional work in the Church, e.g. as deaconesses, directors of religious education, parish workers, missionaries, youth leaders, attention must be given to improvement in standards of training, remuneration, status and security of employment. The study and teaching of the Bible, theology, and kindred subjects would be enriched by the cooperation of women.[2]

The Assembly then ordered that a longer and fuller report on the question be prepared[3] and that a commission be appointed to give further consideration to the "life and work of women in the church."[4] Now known as the Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church and Society, this organized concern of the

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 71. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[3] Since published by Miss Kathleen Bliss with the title: *The Service and Status of Women in the Churches* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1952).

[4] *The Life and Work of Women in the Church*, pp. 75-76.

World Council of Churches publishes regularly in Laity, a semi-annual bulletin originating in Geneva.[1]

Against this background it is not surprising to find Visser 't Hooft writing, "It became clear that this question of the place of women in the life of the Church has become one of the most crucial questions in the whole Christian situation."[2]

Churches are well known to be conservative institutions and it was surely to have been expected that the ministry of the churches would be one of the last areas occupied by the advancing ranks of women workers. Nevertheless, it was equally inevitable that the question of the access of women to positions of lay and professional leadership in the churches would eventually be raised in a culture and age in which women are determined to try themselves out in virtually all the occupations.[3]

The female diaconate in American Protestantism is a special aspect of this larger question of women's status in the service of the churches. Revived in the modern world in Germany in 1836 by

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[1] Laity, No. 7, (May, 1959), p. 1.

[2] The Life and Work of Women in the Church, p. 6.

[3] Women were represented in all but three of the 451 kinds of position listed by the U. S. Bureau of the Census in 1940. Kate Hevner Mueller, Educating Women for a Changing World (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 73.

Pastor Theodore Fliedner, the female diaconate assumed its pattern in advance of modern female equalitarianism. The ordinary women at that time and place had hardly if at all established their rights to any kind of activity outside the home. From one standpoint, Fliedner pioneered new liberties for women in providing the possibility of careers besides homemaking. But the roles assigned to the women who entered the German diaconate in great numbers were no more independent or responsible than the careers they might have had as housewives of that time.

Thus in the contemporary world and especially in the United States of America the unmodernized female diaconate has not seemed inviting to most women. It offered far less education and intellectual challenge and far less independence and responsibility than did the careers for women that took their patterns from the "male" professions or established original patterns in a day of women's rights.

Herein lies the special significance of the deaconess question. The female diaconate is the earliest form of woman's full-time work in modern Protestant church life and for some churches, like the Lutheran, the classical and standard type of women's career in church work. On the other hand, the diaconate has been under the necessity of becoming a modern type of women's work with attractiveness to women who are modern-minded as well as devout.

This is not only a question of the churches' adjusting themselves like other employers to the demands of modern women whose services they want to engage, although it rightly has this aspect. The churches have special responsibility as sources of prophetic moral insight. Reminding us of how they stand under St. Paul's great word, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female,"[1] the churches like to receive their share of credit for the rejection of slavery, the outgrowing by our culture of discrimination based on color or nationality, and the ongoing establishment of the rights of men and women. Therefore the deaconess question also wears the aspect of a test-case in which the churches have an opportunity of showing whether their practice is as good as their precept in regard to women's status.

In reviewing the history of all the American female diaconates from 1918 to the present it will be seen what kinds of development have been effected in the diaconate and how far the female diaconate may have been enabled to become the normative women's ministry in the Protestant churches for the present age. The question is significant, not only for the future of the female diaconate, but for the whole concern for the development of worthy and attractive positions for women in the service of the

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[1] Galatians 3: 28.

Protestant churches of the United States and indeed in the services and professions of the world.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL STATUS OF THE PROBLEM

There was a substantial production of studies of deaconess work in the United States in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth. These were the years when the American diaconates were being established, and the founders were eager to introduce to the public both the apostolic origins of the female diaconate and the recent rediscovery in Europe of its practicality and appeal. It was in these years that the historically strong and currently enthusiastic works (listed in the bibliography) by Bancroft, Golder, Frederick Meyer, Lucy Rider Meyer, Potter, Robinson, Wacker, and Wheeler were written or translated into English.

In the years being focussed on in the present study there has been a very different kind of literature. The volumes that have been concerned with women's place in church work have often made only passing references to deaconesses. The books written about deaconess work have been reminiscent and commemorative. There have also been some dissertations.

Among the studies of women's church work are the volumes by Bliss, Cavert, Bacon, Zerbst, Wyker, Prohl, and Ryrie, and a dissertation by Palmer.

The Commission on Life and Work of Women in the Church of the World Council of Churches requested Dr. Kathleen Bliss to write an interpretation[1] of reports to the World Council from forty-five countries including the United States as to the present situation in the Protestant world with regard to women's work and status in the churches. Miss Bliss found a great increase in the last fifty years in the number and difficulty of the questions being raised about women's contributions to church life. These questions relate to women's voluntary church work, women's election to church governing bodies, and the ordination of women as full-fledged ministers, as well as to women's full-time lay church work. One consequence of this uncertainty is the lack of exact definitions of women's professional functions in the churches and hence difficulty in classifying them. However, certain major types of women's work stand out with some clarity, among which is deaconess work, to which Dr. Bliss devotes considerable space. She does not discuss the educational requirements for any of the women's callings or the distinctively American diaconates, except in passing.

Miss Inez Cavert wrote the analysis of the American situation with respect to women's church work[2] that was used in Miss

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[1] Kathleen Bliss, _The Service and Status of Women in the Churches_ (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1952).

[2] Inez Cavert, _Women in American Church Life_ (New York: Friendship Press, 1948).

Bliss's interpretation of the world picture. The Cavert study was called in a foreword "the most comprehensive ever undertaken in [this] country." As in the Bliss volume, no information is given except in a random way about the education of women church workers; and deaconesses, sharing the attention with many other kinds of women church workers, voluntary as well as paid, are given only two of ninety-three pages.

Bacon's book[1] presents a thorough discussion of deaconesses in the ancient church and in modern English and continental church history, along with other types of women church workers, but says nothing about American deaconesses.

The works by Zerbst,[2] Prohl,[3] and Ryrie[4] are really concerned -- and Wyker's[5] is at least largely so -- with women's admission to the ordained ministry of the gospel, and they mention deaconesses, if at all, only in passing.

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[1] F. D. Bacon, Women in the Church (London and Redhill: Lutterworth Press, 1946).

[2] Fritz Zerbst, The Office of Women in the Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955).

[3] Russell C. Prohl, Woman in the Church (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957).

[4] Charles C. Ryrie, The Place of Women in the Church (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958).

[5] Mossie Allman Wyker, Church Women in the Scheme of Things (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1953).

Miss Mary Palmer devotes her dissertation[1] to the emergence of non-ministerial professional service in the Protestant churches in the United States and especially to the nature of the changes from 1881 to 1936 in the types of positions available and in the curricula offered in specialized training schools, seminaries, schools of education, and schools of music. The gradual elevation of academic standards, the introduction of academic degrees, the changes in course offerings, all receive attention with an eye to establishing trends. This is an interesting work from the standpoint of the proposed study in that it establishes a general Protestant and vocational background for the changing conception of deaconess work and the elevation of the standards of deaconess education, besides offering a survey of the services of higher education in the United States to women's preparation for church work. However there is no material at all on deaconess work or deaconess schools.

Relatively recent American books about deaconess work include those of Sponland, Fritschel, and Rolfsrud.

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[1] Mary L. Palmer, "The Development of Professional Education for Non-Ministerial Services in the Church" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1938).

Sister Ingeborg's autobiography[1] extends about half way into the period of the present study, having been published in 1938 when Sister Ingeborg was seventy-eight years old. It provides an eye-witness account of some of the events that will be directly under survey in this study, but it confines itself largely to one Lutheran strand of the material. It is an evocation of personal recollections, rather than a scientific study, and it takes almost no account of deaconess programs other than those of the Norwegian-American Lutherans in the United States.

Fritschel's work[2] celebrates the one hundred years of deaconess work in America from the beginnings with Passavant to the status of the Passavant-founded institutions in 1949. This is a commemorative volume, rather than a scientific study. Its viewpoint is that of one Lutheran church body, the American Lutheran Church, into whose control the Passavant-established Milwaukee Hospital and the affiliated deaconess motherhouse had passed in 1930. There are six other Lutheran church bodies in the United States with deaconess programs and four other Protestant diaconates in the United States, which receive only cursory notice or none at all in this volume, and therefore it does not approach being an account of the hundred years of deaconess service in America prior to 1949. It does provide an interesting review of developments related to Passavant's Institution of Protestant Deaconesses.

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[1] (Sister) Ingeborg Sponland, _My Reasonable Service_ (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1938).

[2] Herman L. Fritschel, _One Hundred Years of Deaconess Service_ (Milwaukee: Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, 1949).

Rolfsrud's memoir of Sister Elizabeth Fedde[1] is a series of recollections of moments in the deaconess career of a stouthearted pioneering deaconess who was trained in Norway and returned to Norway, but in the space of about twelve years (1883-1895) began both the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Brooklyn and the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Minneapolis.

There are dissertations on aspects of deaconess work in the United States by Chinlund, Steininger, Klick, and Weiser.

Chinlund's study,[2] written near the beginning of the period under survey in the present investigation, when Chinlund was pastor of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha, had a theological objective: to show that the female diaconate, as conceived in United States Lutheranism in 1922, was entirely consistent with and further an embellishment of Lutheran doctrine. This was found to be the case in respect to the deaconesses' proposed motivation in engaging in self-renouncing and charitable activities, the attitudes of the diaconate toward marriage and the taking of vows, and its conception of the relationship of the "ministry of mercy," such as the diaconate, to the "ministry of the Word," that is, the teaching and preaching of the church. There is no consideration in this work of any possible development of the diaconate beyond the form it had taken by 1922.

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[1] Erling N. Rolfsrud, _The Borrowed Sister, The Story of Elizabeth Fedde_ (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1953).

[2] Emil G. Chinlund, "Lutheran Doctrine and the Diaconate," (unpublished S.T.D. thesis, Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Illinois, 1922).

Steininger stated it as the purpose of his dissertation[1] to gather the scattered data pertaining to the female diaconate in the Lutheran churches in the United States and to compile a systematic record of the developments from the beginnings in America to 1934. It is the kind of essay that served to inform a reader in detail as to what the Lutheran deaconesses were and how they came to be what they were. It took note of the major differences in the lines of development and in the practice of the various Lutheran diaconates, especially with reference to control and support of deaconess work, buildings and equipment, and training programs. It made no attempt to expose the underlying trends or motifs of the changes noted or to relate the changes to larger historical patterns.

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[1] Russell F. Steininger, "History of the Female Diaconate in the Lutheran Church of America" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, 1934).

The Klick dissertation[1] also dealt only with the Lutheran diaconates for the years from 1938 to 1948. It described the changes that occurred in respect to the following areas: ecclesiastical regulation of the diaconates, the personal qualifications of deaconess candidates, the deaconess education program, the areas of deaconess service, and the deaconess life pattern. Without proposing and testing a hypothesis, Klick found and encouraged a trend toward more deaconess liberty in respect to the garb, the economic cooperative, residence in the motherhouse, and marriage, and recommended a formal ecclesiastical definition of the deaconess office.

Weiser's study[2] confines itself to the Lutheran diaconates and to the period prior to 1918. It is rich in detail mined from primary sources, particularly with reference to Passavant's efforts. The chronicle of events is followed by an analysis of the interpretations of deaconess work and its problems ventured by motherhouse pastors and others in the papers read to the Conferences of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses to 1916. Weiser asserted it as his purpose to chronicle the events in order to provide a basis for determining why the deaconess movement was not successful in America; however no hypothesis is proposed.

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[1] Richard C. Klick, "The Female Diaconate in Recent American Lutheranism" (unpublished S.T.D. thesis, Temple University School of Theology, Philadelphia, 1949).

[2] Frederick S. Weiser, *Serving Love: Chapters in the Early History of the Diaconate in American Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Board of Deaconess Work, United Lutheran Church in America, 1960).

Two governmental studies[1] of the professions and other occupations in the United States do not once mention deaconesses.

It is evident in the foregoing survey that the current history of American deaconess work has by no means been overwritten and that there is a place for the present study to occupy, with its concern for the current developments in all the female diaconates in the United States.

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[1] Janet M. Hooks, Women's Occupations Through Seven Decades, Women's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 268 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947). LLoyd E. Blauch (ed.), Education for the Professions, U.S. Office of Education (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE IN COLLECTING DATA

The first sub-problem required the gathering of information about the two diaconates of the United Lutheran Church, the Philadelphia and Baltimore motherhouses, as they had been in 1918 and as they have evolved since then.

Before any data were gathered, a scheme was worked out according to which it was clear what kinds of information were required and how the information ought to be organized. It was decided that the concept "deaconess work" embraced three subordinate notions, namely, the conception of the deaconess and of the diaconate, the work deaconesses performed, and the education deaconesses received. The latter two were simple ideas, but the former was complex, comprising a number of generally recognized identifying marks of a deaconess and of a deaconess enterprise. These were listed as follows: deaconess recruitment procedures, admission requirements, investiture and probation, consecration; the relationship of the deaconess to the church; deaconess vows, remuneration, garb or uniform, title, separation; the role of the motherhouse in the life of the deaconess and its organization; and the role of the sisterhood or community and its organization. The conception of the deaconess system was found to include findings with regard to the following items: the role of the diaconate in the life of its church, the government of the diaconate, and its means of support; and the relation of the conception of the diaconate to the conception of other women's work in the church. It was also decided that certain quantitative items, chiefly the numbers of deaconesses involved at various times and places, would add meaning to the picture so far as they were available.

It was determined to describe the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America as it was in 1918 in respect to each of the above items and then to trace the changes since 1918 in reference to the same items and in the same order.

It was helpful to have the interest and cooperation of the deaconess leadership of the United Lutheran Church from the start. Through the help of these women the investigator was given access to the minutes of the Board of Deaconess Work in the board's headquarters in Philadelphia and to the excellent library and files of the Philadelphia motherhouse in Gladwyne, Pennsylvania. The library yielded such sources as the early deaconess handbooks (the school catalogues of the time), recent catalogues, the deaconess text-books, and brochures and articles, as well as the numerous volumes in which accounts are given of the deaconesses of ancient times and of the nineteenth century.

A major source for the years since 1918 is the minutes of the United Lutheran Church in America, to which the Board of

Deaconess Work of the church and the Philadelphia motherhouse reported biennially and in detail. Copies of these volumes were kindly loaned by the Secretary of the United Lutheran Church.

A major source for all the American Lutheran diaconates, including that of the United Lutheran Church, the Proceedings and Papers of the biennial Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America, from 1896 to the present, was loaned in its entirety by the executive secretary of the Board of Deaconess Work.

When notes and references to these sources had been classified according to the rubrics given above, the whole was put into narrative form; the endeavor was made to accompany every description of the making of a change with an account of why it was made.

The second sub-problem required the gathering of information under the same headings from each of the other Lutheran diaconates and from the female diaconates of the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, Episcopal, and Methodist churches.

The Proceedings and Papers of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America provided some information about all the Lutheran diaconates.

A source of larger quantities of data was the library of the National Lutheran Council in New York City, at which the minutes of the general conventions and the yearbooks of all the

Lutheran church bodies involved in this study are available. Here all the official reports made to their church bodies by the various Lutheran diaconates were read.

The material relating to the diaconate of women that was reported by various commissions to the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the actions of the convention, the canons, and the material that appeared in the annual almanacs of the church were read at the library of the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York City.

Reports and minutes relating to the various Methodist diaconates were read at the office of the Commission on Deaconess Work of the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church and in the library at Methodist headquarters in New York City. The executive secretary of the Methodist Commission on Deaconess Work was generous in finding time to discuss the material with the investigator and to fill in the gaps in his notes.

The other deaconess headquarters in every case but two were visited by the investigator in the summer of 1960 with the assistance of a grant from the Samuel Trexler Fellowship. The tour included the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha, the Lutheran Deaconess Home in Minneapolis, the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse in Milwaukee, the Lutheran Deaconess Home in Chicago, and the Lutheran Deaconess Association in Fort Wayne. In every case the investigator was permitted to read annual reports to supporting societies and to church bodies, minutes of the board meetings, back copies of the deaconess periodicals, manuscripts, memoranda, catalogues, brochures, and anniversary booklets, covering the years from 1918 to the present, and also to talk to executives and representative deaconesses. It was impossible to visit the small deaconess groups in Brush, Colorado, and Axtell, Nebraska, but it was possible to read their literature in other motherhouse libraries. Both these institutions have also sent materials through the mail.

The same tour permitted visits to the Evangelical Deaconess Hospital in St. Louis (Evangelical and Reformed Church), the Bethel Deaconess Hospital and Home and the Bethel College Historical Library in Newton, Kansas (General Conference Mennonite Church), and the Central House for Deaconesses, Evanston, Illinois (Protestant Episcopal Church). As in the case of the Lutheran diaconates, all available publications and manuscripts were read and diaconate leaders were interviewed.

The findings were written, in the case of the Lutheran diaconates that are endeavoring to carry on and in the case of the other Protestant diaconates, according to the same headings used in the account of the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church. In the case of the Lutheran diaconates judged to be moribund, a briefer account was written. The attempt was made to accompany every description of the making of a change with a reference to the problem the diaconate was trying to solve.

The third sub-problem called for a summary of the changes made in all the diaconates in reference to all the headings under which the deaconess work was studied. The references to the reasons offered for the changes made and to the problems that the various diaconate administrations were attempting to solve provided the basis for a summary of the problems the diaconates faced and the attempts that were made to solve them.

The data were also consulted for evidence about the relative effectiveness of the efforts made to solve the problems.

With the summaries in hand it was possible to proceed to the answering of two questions: (1) was the hypothesis about a central tendency in all the changes supported or not? (2) What kinds of changes seemed to hold the most promise for the solution of the problems faced by the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in America?

CHAPTER IV

DEACONESSES IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

It is the function of the present chapter to survey the history of the female diaconate from its origins in the early days of Christian history to the general situation of deaconess work in the United States in 1918, the year at which the present study proper begins.

The process of differentiation among the functions of the ministry began very early in the history of the Christian church. At first the Twelve, who had been Jesus' most intimate disciples and had been given the task of being his "apostles," that is, missionaries, were in sole charge of the church-life. But the New Testament describes how the apostles felt that "serving the tables" in the Jerusalem meetings interfered with their devotion to what appeared to be their primary task of preaching, and how they moved to correct the situation by calling for the designation of seven faithful men of the church, subsequently known as diakonoi, who should be in charge of distributing relief.[1] This is, at any rate, the customary view of the origin of the diaconate, although some modern students of the New Testament consider that the seven men referred to above were made "elders" and

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[1] Acts of the Apostles 6: 1-6.

"apostles" equivalent to the original apostles, but distinctive as representatives of the Greek-speaking "Hellenistic" Christian membership.[1] In any event, the *diakonoi* did take their rise within the apostolic era, for another New Testament book states the requirements that were to be made of them.[2] *Diakonos* (pl. *diakonoi*) was in classical Greek a general term for "servant." But for the developing tradition of the church a new order of clergy had been established, for which *diakonos* (deacon) was the specific title.

In the light of the increasing status of the *diakonoi* in subsequent church history it is interesting to note that St. Paul applied the term to a lady named Phoebe. In Romans 16: 1-2, he commended to the Christians in Rome Phoebe, "the *diakonos* of the church at Cenchrea." In the authoritative Revised Standard Version of the New Testament the translation of these verses renders *he diakonos* by "the deaconess." From the same point of view the admonitions addressed to the "women" (*gynaikas*) that immediately follow similar advice directed to *diakonoi* in the First Epistle to Timothy[3] are understood to be addressed to women-deacons, or deaconesses.[1] And the references of Pliny the Younger, about A.D. 112, to ministrae in his famous inquiry of the emperor Trajan about how to deal with the Christian "superstition" are also read as references to deaconesses.[2] It is however a moot question whether the words diakonos in Romans 16:1 and ministrae in Pliny are not used in the general sense, meaning "servant(s)," for there are no other references in the apostolic Christian literature to women with the title "diakonos."

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[1] Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity*, trans. and ed. Frederick C. Grant (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959), I, pp. 48, 66-67, 71-72, 166.

[2] I Timothy 3: 8-13.

[3] *Ibid*.

The next time we encounter women among the Christian ministrants it is with the title diakonissa in the Eastern church of the third century. The women who bore this title were by no means of equal rank with the diakonoi, who ranked immediately below the priests.[3] They were however among the official clergy, ordained by the bishop.[4] Their duties as given in the Syrian Didascalia, a manual reflecting third and fourth century Christian practice, were to visit women parishioners in sickness and women catechumens in order to assist in instructing them, to chaperone visits of the priests to women parishioners, to attend women in connection with their baptism and the accompanying anointing, to bring comfort to martyrs in prison, and to receive women at the women's entrances to the churches and assign them their places.[1]

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[1] F. D. Bacon, Women in the Church (London and Redhill: Lutterworth Press, 1946), p. 45.

[2] Cecilia Robinson, The Ministry of Deaconesses (London: Methuen, 1914), pp. 80-82.

[3] Ibid., pp. 68-69.

[4] "Ordain also a deaconess who is faithful and holy, for the ministrations towards women." From "Constitutions of the Holy Apostles," Book III, Sec. II, in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (eds.) Ante-Nicene Fathers (American edition; New York: Christian Education Co., 1896), VII, p. 431a.

After the fourth century, we catch sight of the diakonissai (pl.) being allowed to disappear in the West, in the course of a series of synodical decisions that no more were to be ordained.[2] In the East, especially in Constantinople, they persisted into the twelfth century.[3] Evidently there no longer was any urgent need in the West in the Middle Ages for the functions they had performed, while the monastic movement had provided a place for the devotion of the women who desired a full-time career with the church. The change of the baptismal rite so that anointing the body was no longer required, and the undertaking of the care of the sick and poor by the state, beginning with Constantine, also played their parts in diminishing the need for their services in the East.[1]

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[1] Bacon, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-48. Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-67.

[2] Bacon, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

[3] Emil Wacker, *The Deaconess Calling, Its Past and Its Present*, trans. Emma A. Endlich (Philadelphia: Mary J. Drexel Home, 1893), p. 30. Bacon, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

A dominant motif of the Reformation in the sixteenth century was a sharp break with current Christian tradition and a deliberate attempt to recover apostolic practice. Some of the precursors of the Reformation, motivated by a similar concern for New Testament precedents, rediscovered the female diaconate and appointed deaconesses in their congregations. The Waldensians did so in the twelfth century, and the followers of John Hus in the fifteenth century.[2] Martin Luther was vehement against what he considered an unproductive and parasitic monasticism, but he could accept the idea of men's and women's convents that were based upon evangelical principles such as the Reformation had asserted, and he expressly wished for a diaconate that would carry on a ministry of mercy along with the pastors.[3]

The Mennonites in Holland had deaconesses appointed by the official boards of their churches to serve among the sick and poor.[4] The English Puritans set apart deacons "of both sorts," that is, of both sexes in the late sixteenth century.[1] The Moravians had evidently allowed the diaconate to lapse since the days of Hus, but on the motion of their patron, Count Zinzendorf, they revived the title and function of deaconess again in the eighteenth century.[2]

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[1] Bacon, loc. cit. Jane M. Bancroft, Deaconesses in Europe and Their Lessons for America (New York: Hunt and Eaton, Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1889), pp. 32-33.

[2] Wacker, op. cit., p. 48. [3] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

[4] D. S. Schaff, "Deaconess," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1909), III, 376.

The Counter-Reformation also produced a freshening of church-life in many areas. The Sisters of Mercy founded by St. Vincent de Paul in the seventeenth century were a clear departure from the older monasticism and recovered a role for women in the church's ministry of mercy.[3]

Evidently suggestions flowed from some or all of these examples to the Lutherans in Germany. In 1817 the Reverend John A. F. Kloenne of Bislich near Wesel (within shouting distance of the Dutch Mennonites) wrote a pamphlet on the revival of the deaconesses of the early church.[4] Miss Amalie Sieveking of Hamburg was eager to launch a Protestant version of the Sisters of Mercy and, although no one answered her call, became a one-woman movement of mercy when cholera struck her city in 1831.[1] Count Adalbert von der Recke-Vollmerstein was proposing a deaconess-convent in 1835.[2] But it remained for Pastor Theodore Fliedner of Kaiserswerth to get the female diaconate actually under way in 1836.[3]

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[1] Daniel Neal, History of the Puritans (London, 1703), I, 344-46, cited by Bancroft, op. cit., p. 142.

[2] Wacker, op. cit., p. 57.

[3] Eugen Lachenmann, "St. Vincent de Paul," The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, XII, 194-95.

[4] Kathleen Bliss, The Service and Status of Women in the Churches (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1952), p. 82.

Fliedner's small Lutheran and Reformed parish in the largely Roman Catholic town of Kaiserswerth was in financial difficulty because of the closing of a major local textile factory in the 1830's, and Fliedner set out on an expedition to raise funds for its support. On his journey he was very much impressed with the work of Elizabeth Fry in England, who was visiting female prisoners in the interest of their rehabilitation and of stimulating reforms in the prisons. On his return to Germany, Fliedner began to make pastoral visits to the prison at Duesseldorf and shortly thereafter accepted into his own family's care a discharged woman convict who appealed to him for help. The summer-house in the parsonage garden became her home and at the same time the first of a great cluster of institutions for the care of needy humanity that Fliedner established at Kaiserswerth.

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[1] Carl Bertheau, "Amalie Wilhelmine Sieveking," _The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge_, X, 405.

[2] Wacker, _op. cit._, p. 61.

[3] There are a number of accounts of the life and work of Theodore Fliedner. The investigator has relied in the following on the accounts in Abdel R. Wentz, _Fliedner The Faithful_ (Philadelphia: Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1936); Bancroft, _op. cit._; Robinson, _op. cit._; Wacker, _op. cit._; Henry Wheeler, _Deaconesses Ancient and Modern_ (New York: Hunt and Eaton, Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1889).

The hospitals of the time were in their own way as bad as the prisons,[1] and Fliedner had had it in mind to start a hospital in which the sick would receive the loving care of committed Christian nurses and in which the unmarried Christian women he was sure would volunteer could be trained for proper nursing. As full of faith as of eagerness to serve, he contracted to purchase the large fine house of the textile magnate when it was put on the market, and with a minimum of simple furniture opened it as his hospital on October 13, 1836. When, shortly after that, Miss Gertrude Reichardt, the daughter of a physician, offered herself as a deaconess-nurse, the first Lutheran deaconess home and hospital was in operation.

Fliedner proceeded to organize what he had begun with a striking instinct for what would prove effective and lasting. With himself as rector (both pastor and chief administrative officer) and Mrs. Fliedner as Oberin (sister superior), he established in the early nineteenth century the pattern that the Lutheran diaconates of America were still zealous to retain in the early twentieth century. He had developed a style of organization with tremendous appeal, for the Kaiserswerth motherhouse had grown to the number of 425 sisters by 1864 when Fliedner died,[1] and there were 32 motherhouses with an enrollment of 1600 deaconesses altogether.[2] Other motherhouses on the same model continued to be founded in rapid succession until in 1893 there were 63 motherhouses with 9,000 sisters.[3] It was calculated in 1936 that there must have been 50,000 deaconesses throughout the world.[4]

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[1] Bliss, op. cit., p. 81.

Fliedner and his associates and followers liked to refer to what he had done as the "restoration" of the deaconess office.[5] This manner of speaking is not really fair, however, to the creativity that Fliedner had brought to his work. The female diaconate of the early Christian church was an office attached to the congregation, as may be seen in the record that forty deaconesses were in the service of the church of Constantinople in the late fourth century when Chrysostom was bishop.[1] It was also an official ministry of the church, the incumbents being ordained to their office by a bishop. In Fliedner's diaconate, on the other hand, the consecration by which a probationer was set apart was not an ordination by the church, but acceptance into full membership by her sisterhood and diaconate. Instead of being attached to a congregation, the Kaiserswerth deaconess was attached and responsible to her motherhouse. She was at the service of the church, but she was chosen, trained, and directed by an essentially private corporation that was in the service of the church's ideals, but not within the organization or control of the church.

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[1] Wacker, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[2] Christian Golder, *History of the Deaconess Movement in the Christian Church* (New York: Eaton and Mains, and Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1903), p. 63.

[3] Wacker, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[4] Ernst F. Bachmann, "Centennial Address," *Proceedings*, the 22nd Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, Omaha, September 27-29, 1936.

[5] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

It was this pattern of Fliedner's that was transplanted to the United States in the case of the Lutheran deaconess work. Fliedner himself brought four deaconesses to Pittsburgh in 1894 to get the Reverend William A. Passavant's Pittsburgh Infirmary under way.[2] The seven deaconesses from Iserlohn, Germany, who established the deaconess motherhouse in Philadelphia in 1884, on the invitation of John D. Lankenau and Philadelphia's German Hospital, had been trained in the same pattern. It was slightly different in the case of the Baltimore motherhouse, founded in 1895. Here it was a church-established board of deaconess work that organized the diaconate, but the deaconesses were not ordained and were responsible to a motherhouse precisely as in Philadelphia.

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[1] Wheeler, op. cit., p. 116.

[2] G. H. Gerberding, Life and Letters of W. A. Passavant, D. D. (fourth edition; Greenville, Pa: The Young Lutheran Co., 1906), pp. 188-92.

How much variation occurred in each of the other Lutheran diaconates will be taken into account below. In the other Protestant groups that took up deaconess work the impulse awakened by Fliedner did find more variety of expression.

In the Church of England the female diaconate was revived more nearly according to its fourth century form. A woman was made a deaconess by a bishop's ordination. Miss Elizabeth Ferard was the first to be ordained, in 1862, by Bishop Tait of London, after she had been trained at Kaiserswerth.[1] However certain ambiguities about the status of a deaconess were permitted to remain, so that it was not clear whether she was a member of the clergy or of the laity.[2]

The American Episcopal Church was connected with deaconess work even earlier, according to a British account, the first deaconess being admitted to the office by her bishop in Baltimore in

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[1] Golder, op. cit., p. 179. [2] Bacon, op. cit., pp. 52-58.

1855.[1] The American Episcopal deaconesses consider the deaconesses of the diocese of Alabama in 1864 and later as the earliest.[2] There seemed to be not much doubt that the deaconess remained a member of the laity. However there was immediately apparent in the American Episcopal diaconate of women a greater stress than in the German diaconate on the intellectual training of the deaconess, as also an absence of community life after the year of training.[3]

In the Methodist churches in the United States the deaconess was clearly a lay person, but her status and work were made the subject of statements in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1888, guaranteeing that the deaconess was an officer of the church and not of a private enterprise. The Methodist diaconate of women also dispensed with the motherhouse and put each deaconess under the direction of the minister of the church or of the executive head of the agency for which she worked.

The deaconess work of the Evangelical Synod in the United States, begun in 1889 in St. Louis, was patterned closely after the Fliedner model, the sponsorship being by voluntary deaconess societies. So was that of the General Conference Mennonite Church. (The Mennonite, Evangelical, Methodist, and Episcopal diaconates of women will be discussed below.)

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[1] Robinson, op. cit., pp. 118-19.

[2] Mary P. Truesdell, Does the Church Want Deaconesses? (The National Conference of Deaconesses, no date), p. 11.

[3] Robinson, op. cit., pp. 120-26.

Deaconess work was also begun by the United Brethren Church in 1891, the German Reformed Church in Cleveland in 1892, the Congregationalists in the state of Illinois in 1901, and the Baptist Deaconess Society of the City of New York in 1895. The First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore opened a training school for deaconesses in 1903.[1] But evidently all these deaconess enterprises had ceased to exist by 1918.

There were also a number of interdenominational deaconess homes founded in the same years, for example in Cincinnati (1888), Indianapolis (1894), and Buffalo (1895).[2] In some instances the name "Deaconess Hospital" survives, but no deaconess work.

Another aspect of the restoration of the female diaconate was the appearance in the same period of deaconesses who were appointed, as those of the sixteenth century Mennonites and Puritans had been, by local churches. The synod of the United

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[1] D. S. Schaff, Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, III, 380.

[2] Ibid.

Presbyterian Church sanctioned congregational deaconesses in 1906.[1] In general, these women were volunteers who visited the sick or helped to make preparations for the Holy Communion or organized charitable work as occasions arose, without compensation. They have been known in recent years among the Baptist, Congregational Christian, Disciples, and Presbyterian churches.[2] Occasionally a woman elected to the official board of a local church (sometimes known as the board of deacons) is referred to as a deaconess.

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[1] *Ibid*.

[2] Inez Cavert, *Women in American Church Life* (New York: Friendship Press, 1948), pp. 35-36.

PART II

THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CHAPTER V

THE CONCEPTION AND STATUS OF THE DEACONESS IN THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN 1918

The United Lutheran Church in America began its existence as a consequence of the merger of three regional Lutheran church organizations, the United Lutheran Synod of the South (founded in 1863), the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America (1867), and the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America (1820). Of the merging bodies, two had some kind of relationship to deaconess work. The General Council had a relationship of mutual recognition with the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses. The motherhouse was founded by John D. Lankenau, a Lutheran philanthropist, to supply nurses for the German (after 1917, Lankenau) Hospital. The Mary J. Drexel Home, named after his wife, was an institution for the care of aged persons. The home and motherhouse were bound together by a common charter, secured in 1887, housed together in the same building, built by Mr. Lankenau and dedicated in 1888, and provided for with a common endowment and board of trustees. The nine-member, self-perpetuating board constitutionally included at least three Lutheran clergymen "recognized by the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States"[1] (after 1893, "recognized by the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America").[2] The Ministerium of Pennsylvania was a constituent synod of the General Council. The deaconesses of the Philadelphia motherhouse were also organized as a local congregation of the Ministerium, reporting annually to that body, and their pastor was a clerical member of the same body, his name appearing on the official clerical roll.[3]

The General Council for its part had also taken formal account of the Philadelphia motherhouse. In 1886 it had instructed the presidents of its synods to bid pastors and people to send support and candidates to the newly founded Philadelphia deaconess work, and in 1893 it established a standing committee on deaconess work. In 1915 the General Council adopted a resolution to the effect "that the General Council hereby interprets the repeated recommendations of the deaconess cause since 1886 and the appointment of a standing committee on Deaconess Work since 1893, as the official recognition of the female diaconate in the organization of the Church."[4] Thus church and motherhouse both could speak of the Philadelphia motherhouse as the deaconess work of the General Council.[1] Following the merger in 1918, the Philadelphia motherhouse moved naturally into the same relationship with the United Lutheran Church as it had sustained with the General Council.

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[1] Article VI, Charter of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, Pennsylvania, 1887, quoted in United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the Third Biennial Convention, Buffalo, October 17-25, 1922, Report of the Board of Deaconess Work, (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1922), p. 393.

[2] Ibid., p. 394. [3] Ibid., p. 394-95. [4] Ibid., p. 395.

The Milwaukee motherhouse, a constituent member of the Protestant Institution of Deaconesses founded by W. A. Passavant, reported to the General Council through its unofficial connection with the Council's Pittsburgh Synod and continued to report (as information only) to the United Lutheran Church in America until 1928. But when the Milwaukee motherhouse acquired its own board of trustees, it became more closely related to the Iowa Synod and the American Lutheran Church, and we shall review its history in connection with the latter church body.

The General Synod was the other merging body with a deaconess work, and in this case we encounter the one instance among the various Lutheran diaconates included in this study of a general church body itself founding a deaconess establishment. In March 1883, the Reverend Frank P. Manhart introduced a consideration of deaconess work into a meeting of the North Branch

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[1] _Handbook of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses_ (Philadelphia: 1913), p. 13. This handbook will be referred to hereafter as the Philadelphia _Handbook_.

Conference of the Susquehanna Synod, a constituent synod of the General Synod. Winning the support successively of the conference, the synod, and the General Synod by his presentations of the deaconess idea, Manhart induced the General Synod to appoint a committee to study the matter, the consequence of which was a decision to elect a Board of Deaconess Work. The board accepted its first candidates in 1893, sent most of them to Germany to study, but one to the Philadelphia motherhouse, and on October 23, 1895, in Baltimore, consecrated its first six deaconesses.[1] In the case of the Baltimore motherhouse, the Board of Deaconess Work, elected by and responsible to the General Synod, was the policy-making and overseeing board of trustees. When the General Synod was about to merge into the United Lutheran Church in 1918, it authorized the board to amend its charter so as to be in the same relation to the United Lutheran Church as it had been to the General Synod.[2] That there should be a Board of Deaconess Work in the structure of the United Lutheran Church had been recommended by the merger commission and provided for in the original by-laws of the new church.[1] Thus under the amended charter, the reorganized Board of Deaconess Work of the General Synod became the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church in America, and the United Lutheran Church came into outright possession of the Baltimore motherhouse.[2]

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[1] United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the Eleventh Biennial Convention, Baltimore, October 5-12, 1938, Report of the Board of Deaconess Work, p. 353-54.

[2] General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Convention, New York, November 12, 13, 14, and 18, 1918, p. 128.

Description of the deaconess establishment of the United Lutheran Church in America as it existed in 1918 requires now a survey of the two diaconates, at Philadelphia and Baltimore, that were a part of the United Lutheran Church. The first thing to be considered is the conception and status of the deaconess herself in these two diaconates.

I. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Philadelphia motherhouse set forth in its Handbooks of 1913 and 1919 what kind of young women it hoped to recruit:

> A Deaconess is a Christian woman (unmarried or widow without children) who, from love to her Lord and in gratitude to her Saviour, has made it her life-work to serve Him in His poor and needy members, and who, in order to carry out this vocation of ministering love, has voluntarily joined the Deaconess Motherhouse, performing her functions under its direction and retaining

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[1] United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the First Convention, New York, November 14-18, 1918, p. 73.

[2] United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention, Washington, D.C., October 19-27, 1920, Report of the Board of Deaconess Work, p. 409-13.

her membership in it as long as she serves the Lord in this ministry.[1]

The conditions of the candidate's admission, spelled out in more detail, were as follows:[2]

(1) She was required to be a member of the Lutheran church. This is consistent with the facts that she was joining a Lutheran congregation as well as a motherhouse, and that she would do her serving in Lutheran congregations and institutions in which she would be thought of by those she served (although not in strict correctness) as an official of the Lutheran church.

(2) Her motivation in applying to the motherhouse was expected to be a pure desire to serve the Lord.

(3) She was expected to possess a mature devotion and not merely a vague emotionality.

(4) She was to have had experience of the grace of Christ. In the background of this requirement loom the words of Wilhelm Loehe that are often referred to as the deaconess motto: "What reward do I seek? My reward is that I may serve."[3] The ideal

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[1] Edition of 1913, p. 13. [2] Ibid., p. 75-78.

[3] Quoted in the Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Conference of the Lutheran Deaconess Homes in America, June 1-3, 1942, Chicago, p. 4. Loehe, pastor of the deaconess motherhouse at Neuendettelsau, Germany, in the middle of the nineteenth century, was one of the great formative spirits of the German diaconate.

deaconess, like the ideal Christian according to the view held in the theology of the Reformation, was thought of as having discovered that she had been started out with the free gift of God's love, forgiving her and assuring her of eternal security in God's care, and that there was nothing for the self to want on its own account, except ways to express its gratitude to God by loving him in the form of his needy creatures.

(5) The candidate was to have in writing the permission of her parents or guardian. In a real sense her parents were giving up their daughter, resigning such claims on her as for financial help in their old age (although not for nursing in case of their illness), and bequeathing her to the care and authority of a new family and a new home in the motherhouse.[1]

(6) The candidate needed a testimony of her good character from her pastor. It was felt that her work would subject her to some special temptations, and girls who had made any sexual mistakes were specifically not wanted in the diaconate.[2]

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[1] Cf. the commentary in Emil Wacker, The Deaconess Calling, Its Past and Its Present, trans. Emma A. Endlich (Philadelphia: The Mary J. Drexel Home, 1893), p. 88, 90. Wacker was being used as a textbook in the Philadelphia motherhouse in 1918.

[2] The Fundamental Principles of the Deaconess Motherhouses connected with the Kaiserswerth General Conference, Article III, 1. The Principles are quoted in full in Proceedings and Papers of the Fifth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, April 26-28, 1904, pp. 9-12. They were adopted by the Conference.

(7) She was to be in good health.

(8) She was to be between eighteen and thirty-six years of age, for she was going into a working career.[1]

(9) She was also to be intelligent, adaptable, peaceful, unassuming, obedient, and cheerful. She needed to be intelligent in order to be able to learn nursing, which was taught largely "on the job" in the manner of apprenticeships. Obedience, reminiscent of monastic vows, will be discussed more fully infra, in the section of the chapter on vows. The other virtues were evidently required for fitting easily into the new family.

(10) The candidate must have had sufficient previous education to be able to read and write, keep simple household accounts, and perform housekeeping chores and feminine handiwork. She must have had basic instruction in the Bible and have been ready to study whichever she lacked -- German or English -- until she could read, write, and keep her accounts in either language.

(11) The candidate had to supply a sketch of her life and a record of her confirmation, implying her baptism and indicating her adult membership in the Lutheran church.[2]

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[1] Wacker, op. cit., pp. 86-87, 90. [2] Ibid., p. 90.

There were no admissions officers in the field in 1918. It was simply hoped that pastors would direct interested young women to the diaconate and that the life and work of the deaconesses would also attract the inquiries of potential deaconess students.

II. INVESTITURE AND PROBATION

The investiture was the ceremony of termination for the candidate of a preliminary period of six months or more of probation and of study in which she had proved herself satisfactory to the motherhouse administration and sisterhood both in inward fitness and outward skill. It was the moment of her admittance to the sisterhood.[1] Now the novice (as she was called in some of the German motherhouses)[2] was clothed for the first time in the special uniform (or "garb") supplied by the motherhouse and began to be called "Sister." She was invested on the basis of a promise to obey the rules of her house and to accept its assignments. But she had not yet been consecrated, and she was known as a "probationer."[3] Investiture had a significance largely equivalent to that of the "capping" ceremony in some schools of nursing, which indeed is descended from investiture, except that the invested probationer in 1918 was already largely past the time of her theoretical studies.[1]

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[1] The Philadelphia *Handbook*, 1913, p. 13.

[2] Wacker, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[3] Julie Mergner, *The Deaconess and Her Work*, trans. Harriet R. Spaeth (Philadelphia: The General Council Publication House, 1915), pp. 95-96. Sister Julie Mergner was Training Sister in the Philadelphia motherhouse at the time.

III. CONSECRATION

The consecration was the ceremony of setting apart a probationer-deaconess as a full-fledged deaconess. It was a solemn occasion, thought of as analogous to the ordination of a minister.[2] It was done as Fliedner had done it, with prayer and the laying of the hands of a clergyman upon the probationer's head,[3] and as it had been done in the fourth century, when many deaconesses were being ordained in the Eastern church.[4] Consecration marked the end of a number of years -- usually three to five -- as a probationer, occupied with the completion of her theoretical and practical education, especially in the more specialized areas for which she was apt, and some service in the field.[5] She was elected for consecration, as for investiture, by the consecrated sisters of her house; the administration of the motherhouse and the deaconess herself had to concur;[6] and the ceremony was performed by the motherhouse pastor in the presence of the motherhouse congregation of sisters.[1]

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[1] Wacker, _op_. _cit_., p. 93. [2] _Ibid_., p. 94. [3] _Ibid_.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 24. [5] Mergner, _op_. _cit_., p. 96.

[6] _Ibid_., p. 88.

IV. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CONSECRATED DEACONESS TO THE CHURCH

The deaconess, according to the concept of her position as it was renovated by the mind of Fliedner, had a curiously ambiguous relationship to the church. On the one hand, Fliedner and some of his followers in the deaconess work liked to speak of the "restoration" of the office of deaconess.[2] They were thus asserting the continuity of the nineteenth century deaconess with the deaconess of the fourth century. But the latter was a member of the clergy. She was far down in the hierarchy to be sure, but she was ordained by the bishop as a minister of the church.[1] The nineteenth century German deaconess, however, was not ordained either by a bishop or by any equivalent Protestant hierarch, but was consecrated by the motherhouse pastor. The latter was ordained a pastor by an authoritative church body, but he was not ordained to ordain. Furthermore, he had not been appointed by any bishop or equivalent authority to his motherhouse post, nor elected to it by any competent church body, so that it might be claimed that he acted, when he consecrated a deaconess, by the authority of the church. The motherhouse pastor was responsible for his activity in the motherhouse to a self-perpetuating board of trustees. Fliedner's own board at Kaiserswerth (the site of the original motherhouse) included some high-ranking church officials, but in each case they had come to the board unofficially and in a private capacity at Fliedner's request, rather than as representatives of their church offices.[2]

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[1] Wacker, *op*. *cit*., p. 75.

[2] "Opinion varies as to whether the diaconate, as at present constituted, can be considered an ecclesiastical office. Kaiserswerth heads those who answer this question in the affirmative." Mergner, *op*. *cit*., p. 89. Herman L. Fritschel, rector of the Milwaukee motherhouse and a leading theoretician of the deaconess movement, agreed. ". . . it it well known what stress Fliedner laid on the thought that the diaconate was the restoration of an apostolic office," he wrote, in "The Consecration of Deaconesses," a paper recorded in *Proceedings and Papers* of The Eighth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Omaha, June 21-22, 1910, p. 32. Fritschel believed that the diaconate was an ecclesiastical office 1) because a churchly set of duties was committed to a deaconess and 2) because the duties were committed to her by a Christian congregation, the motherhouse congregation. pp. 32-33.

Organizationally Fliedner had effectively and evidently deliberately kept the diaconate out of the control of the church. Deeply influenced by the orthodoxist and pietist tendencies of his era, he was profoundly distrustful of the rationalist motifs exemplified in some church officials and headquarters, and this would have been sufficient motivation for his keeping the diaconate unofficial.[1]

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[1] *Vide supra*, p. 29.

[2] Ernst F. Bachmann, "The Motherhouse in the Life of the Sister and of the Church," in *Proceedings* of the Seventeenth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, Baltimore, June 22-24, 1926, p. 31.

By keeping the diaconate a private movement, Fliedner certainly failed to restore the female diaconate as a branch of the clergy of the Christian church. Nevertheless, Fliedner just as certainly did everything he could think of to make the diaconate a service of Christ. In its motivations, in the physical and spiritual content of its ministrations, and in the fact that it did whatever it did in the name of Christ, the female diaconate was intended to be such a service as the Christian church should perform and should recognize as its very own.

What was the relationship of the consecrated deaconess of the Philadelphia motherhouse to the church in 1918? The Fliedner pattern had been kept in tact. She was a member of the Lutheran church. She was a member of a local congregation, that is, the motherhouse community, which was a constituent congregational member of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States. She was not a member of the clergy of the church. She was not a lay official of the church, or of any of its official agencies. She was a lay official of a lay movement with a Christian tradition and intention which operated on the territory of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and the services of which were accepted by the church.

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[1] Richard C. Klick, "The Female Diaconate in Recent American Lutheranism," (Unpublished S.T.D. thesis, Temple University School of Theology, Philadelphia, 1949), pp. 46-48.

The situation was somewhat different in the case of the deaconess of the Baltimore motherhouse, but from the standpoint of church polity not significantly so. She had been recruited, educated, and consecrated by an official board (the Board of Deaconess Work) of what was now the United Lutheran Church in America. But she also was clearly not a member of the clergy, nor an official of the church. She was a lay worker in the employ of a church agency which had also given her a title and a uniform. Her title of deaconess as defined by the Board of Deaconess Work in its constitution made no reference at all to her being anything other than a lay worker:

> A Deaconess shall be an unmarried woman or widow of approved fitness and training, who shall serve Christ and the Church according to the general principles of the female diaconate as recognized by the Board.[1]

V. VOWS

The deaconess in either the Philadelphia or the Baltimore motherhouse of 1918 took no vows at any time. The leaders of the deaconess movement in the United Lutheran Church were admitting at the time that Roman Catholic sisterhoods, especially the Sisters of Mercy founded by Vincent de Paul, had had some influence upon Fliedner prior to his devising of his conception of the Protestant deaconess;[1] and echoes of the "evangelical counsels" of poverty, celibacy, and obedience are clearly audible in Fliedner's diaconate.

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[1] Article VII of the Constitution of the Board of Deaconess Work; the constitution is reproduced in United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention, Washington, D.C., October 19-27, 1920, pp. 410-13.

Nevertheless, there was no explicit vow of celibacy demanded of the deaconess. Rather it was put this way: the motherhouse understood that the candidate and the probationer had renounced marriage in her heart.[2] She was thought of as having made this renunciation positively, for the sake of her vocation to be a deaconess. "It is taken for granted that she recognizes her calling as her life-work."[1] Nevertheless, the deaconess was also said to be thought of as free to accept a further vocation to marriage and thereupon to give up her vocation as a deaconess.[2]

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[1] Frederick Meyer, who was pastor of the German motherhouse at Neuendettelsau, wrote, "Our Deaconess Houses and Sisterhoods are outwardly patterned after the Romish Sisterhoods of Mercy, . . ." in Deaconesses and Their Calling, trans. Emma A. Endlich (Milwaukee: George Brumder, 1878), p. 11. The Rev. Adolph Spaeth, president of the board of trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and acknowledged theoretician of deaconess work who was repeatedly commissioned by the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses to formulate statements of guiding principles, wrote, "Whilst this idea of the association in a sisterhood of a Motherhouse has been adopted after the model of certain organizations established by Vincent de Paula in the Roman Church of the seventeenth century, the Female/Diaconate of our Lutheran Church preserves its truly evangelical character over against Rome . . ." From "The Principles of the Female Diaconate," in Proceedings and Papers of The First Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, September 16-18, 1896, pp. 6-7.

[2] The Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 14.

It will be recalled that the deaconess candidate was also asked to be prepared to be obedient to the orders of her superiors and to the rules of the motherhouse.[3] Here again no vow was exacted, and the deaconess was free to give up her vocation as a deaconess, but while she was a deaconess she was under contract to regard the motherhouse as her surrogate home and like a child in the home to give to the authority of the home her respect and obedience.

Poverty the deaconess certainly also accepted in taking up the vocation to the diaconate, as we shall see in the following section, but here too there was no vow.

VI. REMUNERATION

The deaconesses of the Philadelphia and Baltimore motherhouses in 1918 were not salaried but, like daughters living and working with the family in a rural home, received their rooms, board, clothing, and allowances. The deaconesses were also assured, as they would have been in their own homes, of care in sickness and old age as long as they lived.[1] The motherhouse obligated itself to provide for the physical needs of the deaconess, including free care in case of illness, after she had been with the motherhouse for six months or as of her investiture.[2] She was encouraged to count on retiring in the care of the motherhouse, although she was also free to return to her family home if she preferred.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[2] Philadelphia *Handbook*, 1913, p. 14; Wacker, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

[3] Supra, pp. 48-49; Philadelphia *Handbook*, 1913, pp. 10, 77-78.

The cash allowance, payment of which to the deaconess began as of her investiture, was evidently considered to be, if not generous, at least considerate in the days of Fliedner.[3] But it amounted to fifty dollars per year in the Baltimore motherhouse in 1918.[4]

It was understood that a deaconess not only received no pay for her services, but also accepted no gifts. The institution or church or family using her services paid a fee directly to the motherhouse, and gifts were to be directed by the deaconess to the same destination. The deaconess retained her private means, if any, as her own possession, but she was held to have committed herself to a plain and simple life.[1]

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[1] Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 11. [2] Ibid.

[3] Sister Anna Ebert thought it was "a comparatively large" allowance. In "The Changing Pattern of the Diaconate," a paper read to The Thirty-Third Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America, Chicago, August 26-28, 1957, Minutes of the Conference, p. 16.

[4] General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, Proceedings of the Forty-Eighth Convention, New York, 1918, pp. 113, 117.

VII. GARB OR UNIFORM, AND TITLE

Called the "garb" in 1918, the uniform was the most conspicuous outward sign of the diaconate. The conspicuousness was a major objection to it.[2] Each motherhouse prepared a somewhat distinctive style, as schools of nursing still do with their caps, but essentially the uniform was a plain, long-skirted wash dress with an apron and a cap. It was black for dress wear and grey for work and summer wear. It was the only costume permitted and was worn even off-duty and on vacation.

The garb began with Fliedner in 1836, who had at least one major purpose clearly in mind. In his day an unmarried woman was not permitted to be seen in public and keep her reputation intact unless accompanied by a married woman. The means by which the public could keep track of feminine morals was the clothing worn:

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[1] The Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 15.

[2] Mergner, op. cit., p. 94.

a married woman wore an apron and a distinctive cap. Thus Fliedner was able to liberate the deaconesses to go about their business of visiting the sick and poor and imprisoned by fitting them out with the simple everyday dress of "a married woman of the middle class of the Rhineland."[1]

By 1918 fashions in clothing had changed so much that in America, at least, Fliedner's purpose was all but forgotten. But a cluster of rationalizations of the garb was always at hand. As the Philadelphia Handbook put it: the garb

> is meant to be nothing more than a dignified, practical, plain, and inexpensive dress, not subject to the changes of fashion, and corresponding in the main to the plain attire in vogue during the first half of this [the nineteenth] century, when the Female Diaconate was revived. . . . it secures to the Sisters a large measure of support and protection in their work.[2]

The protection referred to, one understands, is not as in the nineteenth century from the kind of misunderstanding that yielded slander, but rather from molestation and interference. It identified the deaconess as a church-related and charitably engaged person and gained a certain respect for her.[3] It was also an "equalizer" among the deaconesses, since they all wore the same uniform from investiture on.[4] The garb of the Baltimore motherhouse was slightly different in design from that of the Philadelphia house, but it was spoken of in very much the same terms.

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[1] Ebert, loc. cit. [2] 1913 edition, p. 13.

[3] Mergner, op. cit., p. 94. [4] Wacker, op. cit., p. 79.

The title "deaconess" was used in the third person only, in the diaconates of the United Lutheran Church. The title "Sister" was generally used with the given name in direct address: "Sister Mary," but sometimes it was just "Sister" in direct address. "Sister" was also used in the singular and plural as regularly as the title "deaconess" in the third person.

VIII. SEPARATION

There were a number of ways in which a deaconess of 1918 might have become separated from the Philadelphia or the Baltimore motherhouse. She might have been dismissed on health or moral grounds, either during her preliminary probation (before investiture) or regular probation (before consecration). The motherhouse pastor and the sister superior decided together upon the dismissal.[1] The long probation period was devised precisely to give possible reasons for separation time to appear. This was explained and justified by appeal to the Pauline injunction with regard to ordaining: "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, . . ."[2] Evidently nothing needed to be said about dismissal after consecration.

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[1] Ibid., p. 75. Also, Mergner, op. cit., p. 88.

[2] I Timothy 5:22 (RSV).

The deaconess could initiate the separation herself on almost any imaginable grounds. The rules required her to discuss the matter with the chief sister and the pastor of the motherhouse, but whatever her reasons were, so long as they were her conviction, it seemed wise to let her go, because an unwilling deaconess would have been a self-contradiction. Marriage required dismissal from the diaconate.[1] A recurrent reason for withdrawal was to the effect that one of the deaconess's parents was ill and had requested her to come home and "care for her own."

IX. THE ROLE OF THE MOTHERHOUSE IN THE LIFE OF THE DEACONESS

There has been occasion in passing to notice some of the roles of the motherhouse. It was, in the words of Herman L. Fritschel, rector of the Milwaukee motherhouse, the deaconesses' "school, church, and home."[2] It was her home in that it proposed to provide for her as long as she lived, but also in the sense that it regarded her as a child in the home, under the home's benevolent authority. The deaconesses were asked to have confidence in, and give obedience to, their superiors.

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[1] Article III, 4., c), of the Fundamental Principles of the Kaiserswerth Conference, in Proceedings and Papers of The Fifth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, April 26-28, 1904, p. 10.

[2] In "The Internal Management of the Deaconess Motherhouse," pp. 4-8 of the Proceedings and Papers of The Fifth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, April 26-28, 1904, p. 4.

The administration of the home, called "the direction" in 1918, consisted in both motherhouses of the pastor and the sister superior or Oberin. The pastor was the paterfamilias, the chief authority, and generally the sole authority in churchly, intellectual, and spiritual matters. The sister superior was responsible in her own right for the household management, the practical training of the sisters, supervising the sisters' work on the premises, and for what today would be called counseling the deaconesses. She was the deaconesses' immediate superior. The pastor and the sister superior administered together all the matters that involved both their realms. It was together that they accepted fields of labor for the motherhouse, assigned deaconesses to their posts, and changed the assignments. They decided together upon the admission, investiture, consecration, and dismissal of candidates and probationers (in the cases of investiture and consecration after consultation with the sisterhood). They were appointed by the respective boards of the two institutions, in the case of the sister superior after consultation with the sisterhood, and they reported to their boards.[1]

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[1] Mergner, op. cit., p. 88; Wacker, op. cit., p. 75.

The procedure of the placement of deaconesses illustrates the relationship of the deaconess to the motherhouse. A deaconess was assigned to a station only on the basis of a contract made by the motherhouse and the management of the station. It was a part of the contract that the instructions given to the deaconess at the station "must not go beyond the instructions given the Sisters by the Motherhouse."[1] For the deaconess remained a member of her motherhouse, subject to its discipline and entitled to its privileges. The motherhouse pastor continued to be the pastor of the deaconesses on station; he made a point of visiting them in the field and thus preserved the paterfamilias role he exercised in the motherhouse.[2] The renewing of the deaconess's appointment to a station was negotiated by the station and the motherhouse; the wishes of the deaconess were consulted, but they were not determinative, and she did not have the initiative in the matter. The rule of obedience applied. It was also the responsibility of the direction to protect the deaconess on station from unreasonable demands.[3] In the case of the Baltimore motherhouse, it was up to the Board of Deaconess Work to approve the acceptance of a station as an appropriate placement if a deaconess were available.[1]

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[1] Article III, 6., a), of the Kaiserswerth Fundamental Principles, in Proceedings and Papers of The Fifth Conference, p. 11.

[2] Adolph Spaeth, "The Relations of a Deaconess at Work in an Out-station to Her Motherhouse and Its Rector, and to the Congregation or Institution and the Pastor Where She Works," in Proceedings and Papers of the Fourth Conference of Motherhouses, Baltimore, January 6-7, 1903, pp. 4-6.

[3] Ibid.

The motherhouse was also a local church, with services of worship conducted by its pastor every Sunday and most evenings of the week. The feeling was that although the congregation was small, it was an intensely committed and hard-working one and required all the more intensive pastoral help and all the more supportive Christian fellowship. It is a commonplace of Christian theology that there are three great motifs in the life of the church: _kerygma_, the gospel or good news of God which is its sustenance, _diakonia_, the life of loving service by which it thanks and gives glory to God, and _koinonia_ or fellowship, by which the members help one another to appropriate the gospel, to give good service, and to suffer patiently the troubles of life. Writers about the deaconess work have repeatedly stressed the point that the more the deaconess was expected to give of herself in _diakonia_, the more she should be given of _kerygma_ in pastoral care and pastoral instruction and of _koinonia_ in an intensive church life.[2]

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[1] Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of meeting of January 28, 1919.

[2] For example, the Reverend Carl Goedel, pastor of the Philadelphia motherhouse, in "The Foundations of the Motherhouse," a paper recorded in the _Proceedings and Papers_ of the Fifth Conference of the Motherhouses, 1904, p. 25.

The motherhouse was also a school. The Philadelphia motherhouse in 1918 was a school of nursing of the style of those days, organized on the apprenticeship plan. It was also a school of Christianity. The basic theoretical deaconess instruction lasted six to seven months, and even then the deaconess student could not give full time to it, for she had her hospital or household work to do. The pastor and the sister superior along with a physician were the chief teachers, the pastor having responsibility for the theoretical instruction (exclusive of the medical) and the sister superior for the practical. The ideal was a "preliminary course for beginners and the continued instruction of all the sisters."[1] There was also a "training sister" who represented the sister superior in her role of person in charge of the practical training and supervision of the student deaconesses. We reserve for a later section a fuller discussion of deaconess education.[2]

X. THE ROLE OF THE SISTERHOOD OR COMMUNITY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

The reference of the term "sisterhood" is to the aggregate of the sisters of one motherhouse. Both the merely invested sisters or probationers and the consecrated sisters were usually included. If the pastor and sister superior were the father and mother in the home,[1] the sisterhood was the deaconess's own generation. If the pastor and sister superior represented kerygma and authority, the sisterhood especially represented koinonia. The sisterhood rested on "common faith and confession" and was a "compensation for the home and family life" given up. "Sisterly attachment to their associates" helped establish a "great family" in the motherhouse, the deaconesses were told.[2]

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[1] Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 10.

[2] Vide infra, Chapter VII.

The term sisterhood has a curious aptness for a group of women viewed as psychologically one generation and bound together as fellow-members of one "family," having their common home in one motherhouse. This is the aspect of the title "Sister" that the Philadelphia Handbook stressed in 1913. The deaconesses were called sisters as "daughters of one motherhouse"[3] and sisters to each other, mutually supportive and ready to work as a team. This was presented as one of the major resources that the diaconate had to offer to women interested in living in a Christianly useful way: along with the necessary training and a permanent home, it offered "the communion in the life of the sisterhood."[4] "The Motherhouse offers the blessings and advantages of a firmly organized and well-regulated communion, for the protection, assistance, and improvement of the individual."[1]

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[1] Wacker, op. cit., p. 75.

[2] Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 11. [3] Ibid., p. 13.

[4] Ibid., p. 10.

The deaconesses were also called sisters because they ministered to the poor and sick with sisterly love.[2]

The sisters' council was a device through which the sisterhood achieved regular representation before the direction. The council was appointed by the direction from among the eldest sisters, or as in the case of the Philadelphia motherhouse, it consisted of the sisters employed in the leading positions or as heads of departments.[3]

There were hardly any ranks to be spoken of within the sisterhood. The sister superior was a superior officer. The consecrated sisters had more status than the probationers, but this superior status was not necessarily implemented with any explicit greater authority. Sisters would find themselves under the direction of the sister in charge of a station or work assignment, but the difference of authority here was connected with the job description rather than with any kind of advancement in the sisterhood and might be reversed with the next assignment.[4]

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[1] *Ibid*. [2] *Ibid*., p. 13. [3] Mergner, *op*. *cit*., p. 88.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 97.

Even the members of the sisters' council had no express authority on that account as individuals. There was a substantial equality of all sisters that was symbolized by the sameness of their clothing[1] and further expressed in their virtual interchangeability on work assignments.

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 94.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPTION AND STATUS OF THE DIACONATE IN THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN 1918

The foregoing chapter described the conception and status of the deaconess as an individual in the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918. Immediately following is an account of the conception and status of the deaconess system in the same church at the same time.

I. THE ROLE OF THE FEMALE DIACONATE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH, ITS GOVERNMENT, AND MEANS OF SUPPORT

It has been stressed above that the deaconess was not a church official, but a member of a lay movement in the service of the church or of some of the church's concerns. She was responsible to, and governed by, her motherhouse. To whom was the motherhouse responsible?

It has also been pointed out that the two motherhouses, in Philadelphia and Baltimore, stood in somewhat different relationships with the United Lutheran Church. In the case of the Baltimore motherhouse, the United Lutheran Church had come into a position to elect the institution's board of trustees (the Board of Deaconess Work), and it had at the same time become ultimately responsible for financing the house. The Board of

Deaconess Work administered the financing. It did so both by collecting annual fees from the congregations and institutions that had engaged its deaconesses and by petitioning the United Lutheran Church to assign to it a percentage of the annual income of the church.

The motherhouse was not a self-sustaining operation financially. The stations at which the deaconesses were working, by underwriting the maintenance of the deaconesses as well as paying the motherhouse fee, approached covering the costs of the deaconesses in service. What the United Lutheran Church was obliged to do in effect was to meet the costs of the operation of the deaconess school and home for retired deaconesses.[1]

In the case of the Philadelphia motherhouse, the United Lutheran Church was not in the position of owning and being responsible for the institution. Following the merger, the government of the motherhouse remained in the hands of its self-perpetuating board of trustees, and the board reported to the United Lutheran Church, not as a constituent of subservient body, but as an independent body that was desirous of maintaining friendly relations with the church. The report was presented to the church through the good offices of the Board of Deaconess Work.

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[1] Vide the twelve months financial report for 1919-20 according to which the United Lutheran Church contributed $24,180 and the total expenses of the Board of Deaconess Work were $34,085. In United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention, Washington, D.C., October 19-27, 1920, pp. 420-21.

The General Council had made no direct contribution to the support of the Philadelphia motherhouse in the years before 1918. The motherhouse subsisted on the fees collected for the services its deaconesses rendered to the Lankenau Hospital and to various churches, church welfare agencies, and individuals, on fees earned in its Children's Hospital and Lankenau School, and on the income from the endowment that Mr. Lankenau had established.[1] The Lankenau Hospital was the major contributor, especially in direct services such as heat, light, laundry, and food.

The Philadelphia motherhouse had been self-supporting in this way until the steep rise in costs that came with the first world war, when it began to incur regular deficits. The Executive Board of the United Lutheran Church acted to help to remedy the situation with a grant of five thousand dollars in 1918-1920,[2] and in 1920 the motherhouse was put into the budget of the United Lutheran Church for five thousand dollars annually. The full amount was not guaranteed, however, and payments in the following years amounted to substantially less.[1] Thus the United Lutheran Church helped to finance the Philadelphia motherhouse, in contrast with owning and being financially responsible for the Baltimore house.

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[1] Vide United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of Second Biennial Convention, 1920, p. 416, and Minutes of Eighth Biennial Convention, 1932, p. 245.

[2] United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of Second Biennial Convention, 1920, p. 416.

What were the consequences of these two patterns of relationship between the United Lutheran Church and the motherhouses?

Most important with regard to the differences between the two patterns, they had no effect on the position of the deaconess in the church. There were differences between the kinds of training to be had in the two motherhouses and these led naturally to differences of work assignments, and individual deaconesses differed in ability as well as in education, but there was no distinction of rank or honor between deaconesses in the church that was based on their motherhouse connections. There is not the slightest evidence in the literature of a discussion of such a topic, for example, as the degrees of validity of different consecrations.

There were consequences in other respects. The independence of official church control enjoyed by the Philadelphia motherhouse enabled it to stand aside from changes of policy adopted by the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church. An instance of this will be seen in detail in the account of changes in deaconess education in the United Lutheran Church since 1918: the Board of Deaconess Work raised the deaconess admission requirement in 1938 to include two years of college, and the Philadelphia motherhouse decided to keep the old requirement of graduation from high school.

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[1] United Lutheran Church in America, Minutes of Third Biennial Convention, 1922, p. 391.

No thoroughgoing coordination of the educational programs of the two deaconess schools was possible while they were under separate and independent managements. The coordination and the attendant gain in efficiency came with church control of the Philadelphia motherhouse in the years following 1947.[1]

II. THE RELATION OF THE FEMALE DIACONATE TO OTHER TYPES OF WOMEN'S FULL TIME CHURCH WORK

The only type of standardized woman's full time work in the United Lutheran Church in 1918, other than the diaconate, was foreign missionary work. Deaconess work and missionary work were standardized because in each case a board of the church was setting standards for the selection, education, and placement of candidates and applying them with some consistency.[1]

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[1] *Vide infra*, Chapter IX.

Parish work, as a non-deaconess vocation, was far less standardized because, although the Board of Deaconess Work had been preparing young women for it at the Baltimore Deaconess School since 1911, many other institutions in and out of the church were doing so also, and because there was not much uniformity in the expectations of the congregations that employed the parish workers. Other work that women performed for the churches, such as playing the organ, directing the choir, being church secretary, or that which they did for church agencies, such as teaching and social work, were not standardized by any church training programs or by any church action at all.

Deaconesses were consecrated and foreign missionaries were commissioned, and no other group of women workers in the church received anything like the recognition implied in these ceremonies. Deaconesses and missionaries seem to have had the pre-eminence as examples of church occupations for women.

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[1] *Vide* Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America in the *Minutes of the Thirty-sixth Convention* of the General Council, New York, November 12-15, 1918, especially pp. 21-23. Also, Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, in the *Proceedings of the Forty-eighth Convention*, November 12-14 and 18, 1918, especially pp. 49-51.

III. QUANTITATIVE ITEMS

A continuing census of all the Lutheran deaconesses in the country was one of the projects of the first of all the inter-Lutheran cooperative enterprises in America, the Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, which had been founded in 1896 on the initiative and invitation of the Philadelphia motherhouse.[1]

According to this census, the Philadelphia motherhouse was credited in 1918 with sixty-two consecrated deaconesses and twenty-four probationers for a total of eighty-six sisters, and the Baltimore motherhouse with thirty-seven consecrated deaconesses and fourteen probationers, a total of fifty-one sisters. The United Lutheran Church therefore could count one hundred and thirty-seven deaconesses, and in addition three novices, two in Philadelphia and one in Baltimore.[2]

How these numbers of deaconesses had been built up may be seen in a glance at the population figures for the two motherhouses at ten-year intervals.[1] The diaconates had grown very slowly. Philadelphia had:

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[1] Proceedings and Papers of The First Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, September 16-18, 1896, pp. 3-4.

[2] Proceedings of The Thirteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, St. Paul, May 28-30, 1918, p. 5.

	consecrated deaconesses	probationers	total
1897	29	25	54
1908	50	21	71
1918	62	24	86

After being founded in 1884 with seven deaconesses from Germany, the Philadelphia motherhouse had a total of eighty-six sisters in 1918. The net growth had been 2.32 per year since the founding, 1.52 per year since 1897.

The growth at Baltimore had been similarly slow:[2]

	consecrated deaconesses	probationers	total
1897	7	7	14
1908	16	17	33
1918	37	14	51

The net growth had been 1.96 per year since its founding in 1895 with six deaconesses, 1.76 per year since 1897.

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[1] The figures for 1897 are taken from the Proceedings and Papers of The Second Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Milwaukee, October 20-22, 1897, p. 26. There was no conference in 1898, and there are no figures for that year. The figures for 1908 are from the Proceedings and Papers of the Seventh Conference, Philadelphia, April 21-22, 1908, p. 5.

[2] See Footnote 1 above.

The accessions and losses of the deaconess groups in 1918 were on a comparably modest level. The Baltimore motherhouse reported that it lost one sister by death in 1918-19 (the first death to occur among its sisters). Six deaconesses were consecrated in the same year and none were reported consecrated in 1919-20. Thirty-nine consecrated deaconesses and ten probationers were reported to the United Lutheran Church in October 1920, for a total of forty-nine sisters.[1] Thirty-three consecrated deaconesses and twelve probationers or a total of forty-five sisters had been reported to the General Synod in November 1918.[2] Subtracting from thirty-three the one who died in 1918-19 and adding the six who were consecrated in the same year, we get thirty-eight at the end of 1918-19. Since thirty-nine were reported at the end of 1919-20 without further consecrations, one already consecrated deaconess must have been admitted or re-admitted in 1918-19 or 1919-20. The six who were consecrated in 1918-19 must have come from the twelve probationers reported in November 1918, leaving six probationers in 1918-19 and 1919-20, apart from any new probationers that were admitted. But since ten probationers were reported in October 1920, and since three were reported separated in 1918-19,[1] there must have been seven admissions of new probationers in the two-year period 1918-19 and 1919-20. To summarize, there was in the Baltimore motherhouse in the two-year period 1918-1920 a net gain of six consecrated deaconesses, but only a net gain of four women in the sisterhood, and a total recruitment of only seven probationers.

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[1] United Lutheran Church, Minutes, 1920, pp. 414-15.

[2] General Synod, Proceedings, 1918, p. 113.

The Philadelphia motherhouse reported to the United Lutheran Church in October 1920 simply that it had received eleven young women as probationers in the preceding biennium.[2] But since it reported to the Conference of Deaconess Motherhouses in September 1920 a net gain since 1918 of only one probationer and of no consecrated deaconesses,[3] it must have suffered the loss of ten sisters in the same biennium.

IV. THE WORK DONE BY DEACONESSES

The deaconesses of the United Lutheran Church in 1918 indicated the places where their services were performed as either

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[1] Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church, Minutes of meetings of April 22, 1919, and June 12, 1919.

[2] United Lutheran Church, Minutes, 1920, p. 416.

[3] Proceedings and Papers of the Fourteenth Conference, 1920, p. 5.

"stations" or "fields of labor." Stations were operated and controlled by the motherhouse; fields of labor were places of service operated by other agencies with which the motherhouse had entered into contracts.

Stations served in 1918 by the Baltimore deaconesses included a "Christian kindergarten," two deaconesses; an "industrial school," one deaconess; private nursing among needy families, three deaconesses. Fields of labor served by Baltimore deaconesses included the Tabitha Home, Lincoln, Nebraska, for orphans and old people, three deaconesses; the Tressler Home, Loysville, Pennsylvania, an orphans' home, one deaconess; Nachusa Lutheran Home for Children, Nachusa, Illinois, two deaconesses; National Lutheran Home for the Aged, Washington, D.C., two deaconesses; the Baltimore Inner Mission Society, one deaconess; Lutheran hospice for girls, Baltimore, one deaconess. There were two sisters in Africa, at the Muhlenberg Mission in Liberia, and twelve in American congregations serving as parish workers.[1]

How we shall understand what the deaconesses did in these various positions is partly a function of the education they received, which will be discussed in the following section.[2] So, for example, the nursing performed will be assimilated in our judgment to what is now known as "practical nursing" as distinguished from professional nursing, when we consider that the training for nursing received by the deaconesses who trained at Baltimore comprised only a few months of practical experience at the Lankenau Hospital. However, the specific nature of much of the work that was done is observable in the papers and reports presented to the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses.

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[1] _Proceedings_ of the Thirteenth Conference, 1918, p. 6.

[2] _Vide_ pp. 86 ff.

The type of work that occupied the largest number of the Baltimore deaconesses in 1918 was parish work. What shall we understand by this? In the thinking of the pioneers of American Lutheran deaconess work, as well as of their German predecessors, the work of the parish deaconess was the pre-eminent kind of deaconess work because it could demand any or all of the skills required in all the other branches of deaconess service and because it was closest to the deaconess work of the early church.[1] The parish deaconess in the judgment of the Reverend George U. Wenner[2] was an assistant to the pastor who was not a mere employee of the church, but a person to be thought of as a minister of the church who specialized in the work of mercy. She served the children and youth of the church by organizing activities in which they both served and were served; she visited the poor to provide them with both spiritual support and assistance in finding material aid; and she visited the sick as a combination of visiting practical nurse and spiritual resource. She rounded out her service with the care of the altar and its appurtenances, especially in matters in which fine needle-work was involved.[1]

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[1] Cf. Loehe as cited in Mergner, op. cit., pp. 140-41, and E. A. Fogelström, "Parish Deaconess Work," in Proceedings and Papers of the Second Conference, 1897, pp. 11-13.

[2] Wenner was a member of the Board of Deaconess Work.

The next largest group of deaconesses (ten in number) was serving in various welfare institutions, in most cases for the care of old people or orphans or both, but in one case a hospice for young working women, and in another a society for inner mission work. All this falls within what is known today as social work. At the time, however, social work was just beginning to become professionalized; there had not yet been organized the body of learning now regarded as essential to social work education; and, consequently, the work the deaconesses could be held responsible for was what can only be regarded today as sub-professional or semiprofessional work, that is, the work of matron, housemother, or case aide. This will be borne out by the consideration below of the education the deaconesses received. At the same time, the high expectations held on all sides with regard to the motivation and spirit of the deaconess no doubt warrant the belief that the work was done with a full measure of concern for the persons being served, including a special sense of responsibility for their spiritual welfare.

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[1] In "The Parish Deaconess," a paper in the Proceedings and Papers of the Second Conference, 1897, pp. 13-16.

Two of the Baltimore deaconesses were working in 1918 in a "Christian kindergarten" and one in an "industrial school." The Christian kindergarten was traced back to the work of the Alsatian pastor Oberlin in 1779 and had been powerfully reinforced by Fliedner and the Kaiserswerth deaconesses. In 1897 it was judged by a German pastor who had studied the diaconate that one fifth of the whole deaconess work in Germany was devoted to Christian kindergartens.[1] Devoted to the pre-school children of working-class families and taking care of them from nine o'clock in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon, the kindergarten was an example of inner mission work of which the German diaconate was especially proud and fond, and great care was taken to provide the kindergarten teachers with adequate theoretical and practical training. (This was provided for in the Philadelphia motherhouse by having the deaconess students trained by a graduate of the Kaiserswerth Seminary for Kindergarten Teachers, founded in 1840 and claimed by Goedel as the "first seminary for kindergarten teachers.")[1]

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[1] In "The Sister in the Kindergarten," a paper read by the Reverend Carl Goedel, at the time pastor of the Philadelphia motherhouse, at the Second Conference of Motherhouses. Recorded in Proceedings and Papers, pp. 16-21.

The "industrial school" was an enterprise designed to provide training in sewing, cooking, and domestic arts generally to young women who would need either to support themselves or to help to support their families. It was conducted at the Baltimore motherhouse on Saturday afternoons.[2]

The "private nursing among needy families" performed by three Baltimore deaconesses may be thought of as similar to the work of the visiting nurse of today, with the exception noted above that on the basis of her limited nursing education the Baltimore deaconess has to be considered to have been a practical nurse.

Stations served in 1918 by the deaconesses of the Philadelphia motherhouse included the Mary J. Drexel Home, for the aged, two deaconesses; the Children's Hospital which was also housed in the motherhouse building, nine deaconesses; a kindergarten training school, one deaconess; and the Lankenau School for girls, fourteen deaconesses.

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[1] Ibid., p. 17. Goedel gave a glowing account of the kindergarten and plainly hoped that it would become a flourishing work in the United States.

[2] United Lutheran Church, Minutes, 1920, p. 414.

Fields of labor served by Philadelphia deaconesses included the Lankenau Hospital, twenty-six deaconesses; the hospital social service, two deaconesses; the Kensington Dispensary for the Treatment of Tuberculosis, Philadelphia, one deaconess; River Crest Preventorium for children in danger of tubercular infection, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, one deaconess; Lutheran Home for the Aged, Erie, Pennsylvania, two deaconesses; Tabor Home for Destitute Children, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, three deaconesses; Elsinore Camp, Watchung, New Jersey, two deaconesses; and parish work, six deaconesses.[1]

It is readily seen that there was a difference of distribution of the deaconess labors between Baltimore and Philadelphia. The most noticeable difference is one that was certainly to be expected between two diaconates only one of which was hospital-related. Moreover, it is to be understood that the nursing-deaconesses had received at Lankenau Hospital the full professional nursing education that was available at that time, for many of them held teaching and supervisory positions. Some of the deaconesses employed at institutions for the care of children or aged persons were also full-fledged nurses, but others including some employed in the hospitals were not, being engaged in the housekeeping departments, in charge of foods, linens, sewing, and related matters.

The other major difference in the Baltimore and Philadelphia deaconess activities is seen in the Lankenau School, a private school for girls embracing all twelve grades. In addition, there were two Philadelphia deaconesses assigned to "social service," which we should understand as medical social work provided by the Lankenau Hospital.[1] The other types of deaconess work have been considered in connection with the Baltimore motherhouse.

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[1] Proceedings of the Thirteenth Conference, 1918, p. 6.

V. THE EDUCATION OF DEACONESSES

A classification of work done by the United Lutheran Church deaconesses in 1918 is implied in a classification of the deaconesses themselves that occurs in the Philadelphia Handbook:

> In the Sisterhood are Nursing Sisters, Teaching Sisters, and Parish Sisters, according to the three principle spheres of their ministry, the care of the sick and needy, the instruction and training of the young, and the assistange of pastors in such work as these may assign them.[2]

The three classes of work were not mutually exclusive. A parish sister might have been assigned, for example, to spend some of her time as a visiting practical nurse and some as a kindergarten teacher as well as some as an evangelist or missionary. This is a fact that corresponds closely with the very substantial common core in the education of all the deaconesses. Specialization was not unknown in the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in 1918, but it was just beginning to be taken seriously.

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[1] Vide "Special Training for Special Service," a paper read at the Thirteenth Conference, 1918, by Sister Grace Lauer of the Philadelphia motherhouse, in the Proceedings, pp. 49-52.

[2] Edition of 1913, p. 13.

As indicated above,[1] the candidate for the diaconate in the Philadelphia motherhouse was expected to be able to read and write and keep simple household accounts and to do housekeeping and feminine handiwork. She was supposed to have had at least a foundation in Bible study. She was expected to be able and willing to make herself basically proficient in both English and German, if she was not so already. She had the equivalent of a good common school education.

Her basic course in the Philadelphia school was of about seven months duration, from October to April. During this time study was regarded as her primary business, but she was involved for at least two hours each day in doing her chores in the hospital or deaconess home.[2]

Her course of study was primarily in religious subject matter. She studied Bible history, biblical doctrine (particularly as summarized in Martin Luther's Small Catechism), and the history and principles of the deaconess work and of the inner mission or total church program of works of mercy. In the interest of her general cultural enrichment she studied history (and church history), geography (including biblical geography), and arithmetic, German and English, and singing. She studied needlework, both for the maintenance of clothing and for the preparation of altar paraments for the church. And she studied anatomy and the theory of nursing and first aid;[1] for in the event that she did not go on into the professional nursing course, it was desired that she should be at least a practical nurse; and her work in the hospital was regarded as apprenticeship in practical nursing, just as her work in the deaconess household was intended to be an apprenticeship in domestic arts.

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[1] Admission requirements, pp. 46 ff.

[2] Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 78.

The underlying conception and spirit of all this was set forth by the president of the board of trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, the Reverend Adolph Spaeth, in 1897. The purpose of deaconess education was to develop, he said, "the personal religious character, the technical ability, and the general culture, which a deaconess ought to possess . . ."[2] He was emphatic in asserting that Christian personality or character was the primary aim.[3] If a candidate was bright enough, the motherhouse could afford to spend some time reviewing with her the "elementary branches," reading, writing, and arithmetic, the catechism, and Bible history. Spaeth also wanted every candidate to study, in addition to basic nursing, "the proper methods of instruction in infant schools, Bookkeeping and Paramentics"[1] (the preparation of altar paraments, communion wafers, and the like).

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[1] Ibid., pp. 75-78.

[2] "Theses on the Training of Deaconesses," in the Proceedings and Papers of the Second Conference, 1897, p. 4.

[3] Ibid., p. 5.

It was clear even then that one year of study was not enough, and Spaeth proposed that "after the completion of the regular course there should be at least one hour per week set apart for all the Deaconesses for the continuous study of the Scriptures and the Catechism and the office of Deaconess."[2] This was the policy that had been implemented in Philadelphia by the time of the 1913 edition of the Handbook: "a preliminary course for beginners, and the continued instruction of all the sisters."[3]

The Reverend Charles Hay, at the time pastor of the Baltimore motherhouse, developed a similar conception of the proper deaconess curriculum in an address delivered in 1910.[4] He indicated the following subjects as requisite: Bible, doctrine,

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Philadelphia Handbook, 1913, p. 10.

[4] "What and How Much should be Required in the Theoretical Course of Study for Sisters?" in Proceedings and Papers of the Eighth Conference, 1910, pp. 16-23.

Christian ethics, history, church history, Christian biography, worship, church organization, philanthropic organizations, missions, pedagogy (especially early childhood), hygiene, the care of the sick, diaconics (the history and principles of deaconess work), and the life of Christ. With regard to the care of the sick, he had in mind the same limited course in practical nursing that was part of the basic training of the Philadelphia deaconesses. He noted that the requirements of nursing education were likely to become greater rather than less, and he thought that in view of this more deaconess students would be likely to omit medical training entirely and put the time in on preparation for teaching. At the same time he hoped that special care would be taken to provide for the teaching deaconesses that "spirit of humility and self-sacrifice which have so distinctively characterized those who labor for the relief of bodily distress."[1]

Since 1906 a Little Children's School had been conducted at the Baltimore motherhouse by one of the deaconesses. Each year one student was given a year's training as assistant in the school and the remaining deaconess students observed the procedures at stated times. The Philadelphia motherhouse kindergarten school had been in operation since 1895.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 22.

[2] "The Motherhouse and the Kindergarten Work," a paper by Charles Hay, in Proceedings and Papers of the Ninth Conference, 1912, pp. 22-28.

The picture of deaconess education in the United Lutheran Church in 1918 that emerges may be summarized as follows. The students began at the very youngest at age eighteen on the minimum basis of an elementary school education. They were given the equivalent of one rather short school year of basic deaconess education. This year provided studies in Christianity, "general culture," and technique. The invariable technical instruction was in what may be called elementary nursing and also in domestic arts (Philadelphia) or early childhood education (Baltimore). There was a modest amount of continuing non-specialized education in religious subject matter -- Bible, church history, diaconics -- after the investiture that followed basic training. Three hours per week was the rule in Philadelphia in 1910.[1] Most Philadelphia deaconesses went on to complete the full nurses' training of the Lankenau Hospital, which occupied eight months per year for three years.[2] Those who did not stepped immediately into the housekeeping or institutional assistants' work that they were either prepared for or would learn by apprenticeship. The Baltimore sisters went on with a second year designed to prepare them chiefly for parish deaconess work, especially through further studies in religion and religious education. Specialized advanced study was beginning to be possible for some deaconesses, usually on the basis of graduate nurse status, in such fields as pharmacy, dietetics, social work, and education.[1]

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[1] "The Training of our Sisters after the Completion of the Course for Candidates," a paper by the Reverend E. F. Bachmann, then pastor of the Philadelphia motherhouse, in Proceedings and Papers of the Eighth Conference, 1910, p. 27.

[2] "Sources of Danger to the Spiritual Life in our Motherhouses," a paper by E. F. Bachmann in Proceedings and Papers of the Ninth Conference, 1912, p. 32.

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[1] "Special Training for Special Service," a paper by Grace Lauer in Proceedings of the Thirteenth Conference, 1918, pp. 49-52.

CHAPTER VII

CHANGES IN THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH SINCE 1918 (I)

In the preceding two chapters the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America was described as it was in 1918. The purpose of the present chapter and of those immediately following is to indicate the changes that have occurred in this connection since 1918. For ease of comparison, the discussion will be organized on the same pattern that was used in the preceding chapters.

I. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Procedures for the recruitment of deaconess students continued to be generally what they had been in 1918 until the early 1940's, when various kinds of intensification were tried. The chief reliance in 1918 was on the impression deaconesses would make and on what pastors would say on behalf of the deaconess cause. Recruitment is one aspect of the first of the purposes of the Board of Deaconess Work to be stated in its charter,[1] and an

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[1] Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America, October 17-29, 1920, p. 411. In following references these Minutes will be indicated in the following style: e.g., ULCA, 1920, p. 411.

"Outline of Policy," presented to the United Lutheran Church by the Board of Deaconess Work in 1920 also stressed recruitment in its first sentence: "The general policy of the Board will embrace: 1. The fostering by all proper means of the interest of the Church in the female diaconate and the securing of a greater number of deaconesses for the waiting fields."[1] However, examination of the record does not show strenuous recruiting activity until relatively recently.

From time to time a new pamphlet was published and circulated. In 1919 and 1920 the Board wrote to pastors and asked them to forward the names of potential recruits to one of the motherhouses.[2] In 1920 the Board of Deaconess Work asked the United Lutheran Church to set aside Septuagesima Sunday as an annual occasion on which pastors would promote the deaconess work; the Board would supply free literature. The suggestion was approved by the church in 1926.[3]

The Board of Deaconess Work authorized the publication of a new handbook in 1921[4] and repeatedly in subsequent years, but these were more for the guidance of deaconess students than they were recruitment instruments.

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[1] ULCA, 1920, p. 417. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 413.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 422; ULCA, 1926, p. 94.

[4] Minutes of the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church in America, Baltimore, June 22, 1921. In following references these minutes will be indicated in the following style: e.g., BDW, 6/22/21.

In January 1922 the Philadelphia motherhouse began publication of a quarterly, The Deaconess Messenger, which was mailed to friends and inquirers, but not to pastors generally,[1] although the chief recruitment hope was that more pastors would present the cause to the young women in their parishes.[2] The Baltimore motherhouse had been distributing a similar paper, Motherhouse Tidings, since 1917.[3]

In 1923 the Board of Deaconess Work authorized the production of a deaconess-work study book as a means of publicity among the organizations of the church.[4] The circumstances leading to the authorization of the study book throw light on the kind of unfavorable publicity deaconess recruitment was struggling against. In the course of an opinion it was asked to deliver on the expansion of opportunities for lay service in the church, the Executive Board of the United Lutheran Church declared:

> Among our deaconesses there is a surprising scarcity

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[1] BDW, 1/24/22. [2] BDW, 1/23/23.

[3] Sister Anna Melville in conversation March 9, 1961. At the present time both publications are mailed more widely and their contents are more definitely promotional.

[4] BDW, 4/24/23.

> both of college graduates and of the daughters of ministers. The objections which young women are commonly raising against the Diaconate may all be summed up in the one objection that it imposes too great a limitation upon individual freedom. Four specifications of such limitation may be noted: a, The assignment to fields of labor without choice by the individual Deaconess; b, The implication never to marry; c, The absence of any arrangement for support through salary; d, The use of the garb. We believe heartily that the objections are wholly misconceived. Nevertheless we believe that the Church should openly hear them, and we definitely,
>
> Recommend (1) That the Deaconess Board be requested to prepare a brief, attractive study course upon the Diaconate in which these objections will have special attention. Also that the Board regularly use a Deaconess for presentation of the Diaconate before the Church and before congregations.[1]

(The other recommendations of the Executive Board were not concerned with deaconess recruitment.)

The recommendation was adopted by the United Lutheran Church.[2]

In 1932 the Women's Missionary Society of the United Lutheran Church published a "fine booklet" in the interest of publicizing deaconess work, called "The Deaconess in Service."[3] In 1938 a folder entitled "So You Are Going To Be A Deaconess" was published by the Board of Deaconess Work.[4] Bulletin covers were regularly sent to the pastors who ordered them for use on the deaconesses' day, Septuagesima Sunday.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1922, p. 100. [2] *Ibid*., p. 110. [3] BDW, 10/19/32.

[4] ULCA, 1938, p. 349.

One of the earliest of a long line of surveys of the deaconess work by various committees and commissions was concluded with a request that the Board of Deaconess Work adopt a more vigorous recruitment policy, in view of the numerous unfilled requests for deaconesses,[2] and that it particularly endeavor to recruit women of "advanced education,"[3] that is, college graduates or women already started in college.

In consequence of this recommendation, a deaconess was engaged to make a tour of the Lutheran churches and colleges in the South in search of candidates. (The deaconess reported to the board that the students felt that there should be at least some college work included in the education of a deaconess.[4]

In 1936 the Board of Deaconess Work expressed itself as gratified by the excellent coverage it was getting in the official weekly magazine of the United Lutheran Church, The Lutheran.[5] It also persuaded the convention of the church to adopt a resolution urging the pastors of the churches not only to continue "to present the deaconess cause to their people on Septuagesima

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[1] Ibid. [2] BDW, 1/22/29; BDW, 4/23/29. [3] BDW, 4/24/30.
[4] BDW, 4/23/31. [5] BDW, 2/27/36.

Sunday," but "that through their church schools and young women's groups reference be made to the opportunities for Christian life-service in the ministry of the deaconess."[1]

In 1938 the office of Executive Secretary of the Board of Deaconess Work was established, and the reason, according to the report of the board to the church, was "in order to properly promote the work and make the Church aware of the opportunities and needs of deaconess work."[2] A part of the work of promotion was of course to promote an increase of applications for admission to the diaconate.

In 1940 the Board of Deaconess Work expressed its appreciation to the United Lutheran Church of the manner in which all the publications of the church for youth, women, men, and church school teachers, as well as the general weekly, had featured material about the deaconess work, and of the opportunities given to deaconesses by the women's and youth organizations to be featured in their convention programs.[3]

The whole month of June was assigned to the deaconess cause, in place of the single day Septuagesima Sunday, beginning in 1942, as a time in which to call attention to itself in church publications and publicity.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1936, p. 315. [2] ULCA, 1938, p. 350.

[3] ULCA, 1940, pp. 305-06.

"In 1943, concern because the number of fulltime women church workers was not growing in proportion to the increasing demand for their services led the board to a planned recruitment program."[2] And so the Board of Deaconess Work reported to the church in 1944 that it had installed a deaconess in the newly established office of Field Secretary, with recruitment as her sole responsibility.[3] In 1946 the board reported that since 1944 the Promotional Secretary (as the field secretary was then called) had spoken and had interviews in twenty synods, at churches, synod and conference meetings, pastors' meetings, colleges, seminaries, women's missionary meetings, youth and student gatherings, and summer camps.[4] In 1951 this field work was enlarged by adding three associate field secretaries to the staff for a period originally set at two years, but later increased to four years.[5] In 1956 there were two regular field secretaries;[6] in 1958, one field secretary and one personnel secretary.[7]

Ever since 1938, two years of college had been requisite for admission to the Baltimore school. The deaconess schools themselves made no charges for room, board, or tuition to deaconess candidates, but young women of limited resources who wished to become deaconesses had to finance two years of college. The need for scholarships therefore became a part of the recruitment picture, and the Board of Deaconess Work in its 1944 report asked that more scholarships be established, for deaconess students in colleges and graduate and professional schools, and for non-deaconess parish worker and church secretary students in the deaconess schools.[1] The United Lutheran Church adopted a resolution calling upon its constituent synods to consider favorably the giving of financial assistance to young women preparing to enter the diaconate and to attempt to arouse their congregations to secure more candidates for the ranks of trained women church workers.[2] In 1946 the Board of Deaconess Work reported that of thirty-two synods in the United Lutheran Church, all but three "have either taken favorable action or are favorably inclined toward giving financial aid to candidates in training for the diaconate."[3]

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[1] ULCA, 1942, p. 402. [2] ULCA, 1958, p. 791a.

[3] ULCA, 1944, p. 404a. [4] ULCA, 1946, p. 542a.

[5] ULCA, 1952, pp. 885b-86a. [6] ULCA, 1956, pp. 887b.

[7] ULCA, 1958, p. 794a.

It is likely that the adoption of the "collegiate plan," according to which deaconess students could earn bachelor degrees while pursuing their deaconess studies,[4] had some recruitment value through making the diaconate more attractive. The Board of Deaconess Work took a similar view in 1950 when it reported to the United Lutheran Church: "Progress in recruitment can be made only if the educational standards and facilities are adequately established and maintained."[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1944, p. 411a. [2] Ibid., p. 413.

[3] ULCA, 1946, p. 541b. [4] Ibid., p. 537b.

The use of a new recruitment device was reported in 1946. Five "Life Service Institutes" were conducted, two at Baltimore and three in other cities. "The purpose was to acquaint young women with the work of the diaconate and the Church. Over 200 girls of high school age or over attended these five institutes."[2] In 1958 the board reported that "four weekend institutes are conducted annually by the students in the deaconess schools."[3]

The Board of Deaconess Work reported satisfaction in 1950 with its recent recruitment efforts conducted through the office of field secretary, inaugurated in 1943. The admissions had climbed since 1943 as indicated: in 1943, six; in 1944, four; in 1945, three; in 1946, sixteen; in 1947, ten; in 1948, nine; in 1949, ten; in 1950, seventeen. The number of deaconess students in the two schools advanced from fifteen in 1943 to forty-six in 1950.[4] A gain of fifty-one sisters in the five-year period

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[1] ULCA, 1950, p. 690a. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 544b.

[3] ULCA, 1958, p. 797b. [4] ULCA, 1950, p. 690b.

1945-50, offset by the death of twelve and withdrawal of ten (eight for marriage), yielded a net gain of twenty-nine deaconesses.[1] The rate of increase of almost six sisters per year compares favorably with the rate of slightly more than three per year noted between 1897 and 1918.

The Board of Deaconess Work was only relatively satisfied, however, and established a "committee on the study and preparation of a comprehensive program for the expansion of the diaconate." It expressed as one of its purposes in doing so "the need of making a more effective appeal to young women . . . ."[2] The "plans for the expansion of the diaconate" adopted as a result of the work of this committee will be examined elsewhere in this study. Here it is simply intended to mark the motivation, in introducing salaries and making the uniform optional, of making the diaconate more attractive to modern young women.

The board's latest word on the subject of recruitment expressed the opinion:

> that to assure continued growth a strong program of promotion for the diaconate must have a permanent and prominent place in the structure of the church, as well as a recruitment program for women church workers in general. The calls from agencies and congregations for deaconesses attest to the needs.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 691a. [2] Ibid., p. 691b.

[3] ULCA, 1958, p. 798a.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The age range within which applicants were expected to fall had been eighteen to thirty-six for the Philadelphia motherhouse and eighteen to forty for the Baltimore house. In 1919 the Board of Deaconess Work, acting on a resolution presented by the Baltimore sisters' council, set the limits at eighteen and thirty-six years.[1] (No reason was given, but since the active sisters supported the retired sisters, who were entitled to live in the motherhouse until death, it was perhaps felt that a maximum of years of active service should be given before admission to the ranks of the retired. It was also true that the age limits eighteen and thirty-six were usual in the German motherhouses.)

The actual decision on admission was traditionally the responsibility of the pastor and directing sister and continued to be so in Philadelphia. However, the Board of Deaconess Work acted on admissions at Baltimore through one of its committees until 1927, after which the Baltimore direction assumed this task.[2] (The Baltimore motherhouse direction in 1927 was identical with the local board of managers, a committee of the Board of Deaconess Work.) However, the sisters' council of the Baltimore motherhouse made its feelings felt in the Board of Deaconess

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[1] BDW, 4/22/19. [2] BDW, 4/24/27; 10/23/28.

Work in 1925, in "not encouraging" the admissions committee to accept an older applicant.[1]

The Board of Deaconess Work reported to the United Lutheran Church in 1948 that its standing committee on personnel was "responsible for the admission of candidates to the Diaconate, according to the established standards and subject to the approval of the Board."[2] The personnel committee was established by the Board in 1946, in response to a request from the cabinet of secretaries, representing both motherhouses.[3] Since the Philadelphia motherhouse had already come fully under the wing of the United Lutheran Church by this time, we may assume that the personnel committee acted on applicants on behalf of both motherhouses.

In 1931 the Board of Deaconess Work raised the admission requirement so that the applicant at Baltimre was obliged to have a high school diploma or the equivalent.[4] There is no record of a similar rule at Philadelphia at this time, but it is evident that girls with high school education and more were being admitted. In 1934 the Philadelphia motherhouse reported to the United Lutheran Church that the time of deaconess education had lengthened so drastically, that is, included two years of basic religious and diaconic training and then three years of nurse education and even more if college education was required, that it was more expensive than could be afforded to have to provide a candidate with the remainder of her high school education besides.[1]

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[1] BDW, 10/27/25. [2] ULCA, 1948, p. 629b. [3] BDW, 6/19/46.

[4] BDW, 6/25/31.

The Baltimore school reported in 1936 that "some who had college and university training, some who have had teaching and other practical experience, and several with nurses' training" had been admitted.[2] At the same time the Philadelphia school could say that seven deaconesses had been given college education at the expense of the motherhouse, that one was finishing college at the time, and that one had entered the diaconate with a college degree.[3] In 1938 Philadelphia had ten deaconesses with college degrees.[4]

In 1938 the Board of Deaconess Work reported a further elevation of entrance requirements at the Baltimore school. Although the board reserved the right to make exceptions, it announced an entrance requirement of a "minimum of two years of college work."[5] To this was attached the justification, "We are looking forward to the time when the preparation of the deaconess will be sufficiently thorough to meet modern standards in similar activities."[1] At the same time it was said that "spirituality [in the applicant] is of prime importance. The personality of the candidate must meet carefully administered tests."[2] In defense of the higher entrance requirement it was also said by the Board of Deaconess Work that "the work of the Church demands better trained workers," and "young women in some other churches are required to do work leading to a college degree before they enter the Diaconate."[3] However, the Philadelphia motherhouse in 1938 reported that a high school diploma continued to be the minimum requirement.[4]

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[1] ULCA, 1934, p. 362. [2] ULCA, 1936, p. 317.

[3] Ibid., p. 319. [4] ULCA, 1938, p. 358.

[5] Ibid., p. 351.

When the United Lutheran Church mandated a survey of the deaconess work, which was made by the executive secretary of the Board of Education of the church, the report made to the Board of Deaconess Work and to the church in October 1944 particularly praised the admissions procedures of the Board of Deaconess Work "for the care exercised in the selection of candidates. The questionnaire blanks, personality and ability tests, and the method of interviews by persons of experience and understanding were approved."[5]

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] ULCA, 1940, p. 302.

[4] ULCA, 1938, p. 358. [5] ULCA, 1944, p. 410a.

The cooperative programs launched by the Philadelphia deaconess school with Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, in October 1945,[1] and by the Baltimore school with Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, in 1946,[2] according to which the two liberal arts colleges agreed to accept credits earned at the motherhouse schools, implied the satisfaction of the colleges with the admission policies of the motherhouses. As other United Lutheran Church colleges joined the first two in accrediting the deaconess schools, they in turn validated the admission standards of the schools. The continuance of these accrediting arrangements to the present time indicates that the deaconess schools have been able to improve their admission requirements at approximately the same rate as the colleges.

III. INVESTITURE AND PROBATION

Investiture was in 1918 the ceremony in which the aspirant to deaconess status received her garb and the right to be called "Sister." From the time of her admission to the motherhouse school she had been a "novice" or "pupil" or "candidate" for a period of preliminary probation of about six months duration, while she underwent basic religious and theoretical training. From her investiture until her consecration she was called a "Probationer," for she was on probation still. The duration of her probation was usually three to five years, during which she continued her practical education on the job.

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[1] ULCA, 1946, p. 543. [2] BDW, 4/25/46.

The changing pattern of deaconess education necessarily carried with it some changes of the timing of the candidate's movement through her probation, and there was some modernization of the terminology, but the basic concepts of investiture and probation remain recognizable.

In the earlier part of the period since 1918, as the deaconess education tended to become more formal, taking more time (two school years in Baltimore) and developing a more clear-cut terminal point, the working phase of probation tended to become shorter. Thus in 1922, a class of nine probationers was consecrated in Baltimore after one year of service in the field following the completion of training.[1] However, in 1929 its committee on education recommended to the Board of Deaconess Work that the duration of both deaconess education and probation be lengthened. There is no record that the board adopted the idea.[2]

In 1933 the sisters' council of the Baltimore motherhouse recommended that sisters not be consecrated without three years of active service in the field following training.[3] Since the sisters' council recommended probationers for consecration at Baltimore,[1] it was in a position to see its recommendations put into effect.

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[1] BDW, 11/14/22. [2] BDW, 4/23/29.

[3] BDW, 2/23/33.

The Board of Deaconess Work adopted a resolution in 1928 to provide that thereafter the board itself would act in each consecration of a deaconess of the Baltimore motherhouse. The sisters' council would continue to recommend a probationer for consecration, and it would continue to be necessary for the consecrated deaconesses and the pastor to concur, but the board would also approve every candidate.[2] The president of the board thereafter, rather than the Baltimore motherhouse pastor, performed the act of consecration.

It was with the coming of the collegiate program of deaconess education in 1945-46 that the most important revisions of custom developed. The term probationer fell into total disuse. The young woman from the time of the approval of her application for admission until her consecration was known simply as a "deaconess student." During the second year of her residence in the deaconess house and school (the fourth year of her career since admission), she was invested in the deaconess uniform and admitted to the deaconess family through a service of investiture.

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[1] BDW, 1/22/24. [2] BDW, 1/24/28.

What had once been known as her probation (currently her student status) continued now until she had graduated from the deaconess school, finished college and the required year of supervised clinical experience in the field or further professional education, as in social work, and accepted her first regular field of service. At that time she was "set apart" by the "Rite of Consecration" and became a full-fledged deaconess.[1]

The act of consecration of the deaconesses of both motherhouses became the responsibility of the Board of Deaconess Work, acting for the United Lutheran Church, following the development of the parallel relationships of both motherhouses to the board and the church in 1947.[2]

When the nongarbed deaconess came into being for the United Lutheran Church in 1952,[3] and when for deaconesses who chose civilian dress there was no uniform in which to be invested, the term "investiture" was retained in its remaining sense of the conferring of an office, and the deaconess student received the same deaconess student pin to wear that the garbed deaconesses received.[4]

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[1] Deaconess Schools of the United Lutheran Church in America, Catalogue 1956-58, p. 16.

[2] Ibid. [3] ULCA, 1952, p. 882b.

[4] Deaconess Schools, Catalogue, 1956-58, p. 16.

It would appear to be safe to say that no substantial change occurred in the period being examined in this study in respect to the investiture and probation of deaconess students.

IV. CONSECRATION

There was almost no change at all in the matter of the consecration of the United Lutheran Church deaconess in the period from 1918 to the present, and no change of any substance.

In 1950 the Board of Deaconess Work "adopted as a policy, wherever practicable, the arranging of a consecration service for a deaconess in her home church."[1] No reason was given. But it may be instructive to consider the motives for making the same change of practice in the Lutheran Deaconess Association of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. In that case it was to take the opportunity that was available to proclaim the deaconess cause in the presence of a new audience, in order to win new friends for the cause and possible new recruits to the diaconate.[2] With consecrations held year after year in the presence only of the motherhouse congregation and such relatives and guests as could come to the motherhouse, there may have been a valuable experience of renewing their own consecration for the deaconesses who were present, but the new minds that could be reached with the deaconess story were very few.

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[1] ULCA, 1950, pp. 694-95a.

[2] Arnold F. Krentz, Lutheran Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne, in conversation September 5, 1960.

At the start of the period we are reviewing, the consecration of the Philadelphia deaconesses was performed by the pastor of the Philadelphia motherhouse. The highest ecclesiastical authority in whose name he could act was the congregation made up of the Philadelphia sisters, of which he was the pastor. He was legally and morally responsible to the Board of Trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, which had appointed him, and in a way he acted in the name of the board and of the institution it controlled, but they were no kind of ecclesiastical authority from the standpoint of any Lutheran theory of the church.

The situation was different in Baltimore. There, too, it was the motherhouse pastor who performed the act of consecration. But he had been appointed by the Board of Deaconess Work, which was a fully authorized agency of the United Lutheran Church. The highest ecclesiastical body in whose name the Baltimore motherhouse pastor consecrated was the United Lutheran Church in America.

The point being made is not that the difference between the two kinds of consecration was momentous, but that no account of the difference was taken in the discussions of the deaconess work that have been reviewed. The reason is that consecration itself was an act without established theological or ecclesiastical weight. It had the rich meaning for the deaconess who underwent it that it might have for anyone to be prayed for specifically by a congregation gathered for no other purpose. It was also a public recognition of her development and achievements and fitness for carrying responsibility. But it conferred no ecclesiastical authority or office. It was not comparable to ordination.

When the Philadelphia motherhouse was brought into organic relationship with the Board of Deaconess Work and the United Lutheran Church, and the Board of Deaconess Work acted in the consecration of the Philadelphia sisters just as it did in that of the Baltimore sisters, no one said or believed that any real change had taken place in the meaning or weight of the act of consecration of the Philadelphia sisters.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEACONESS TO THE CHURCH

No change of any kind occurred in the relationship of the deaconess to the United Lutheran Church during the period under study. It continued to be what it had been -- she was a lay worker who belonged to the church and whose preparation was recognized by the church, who was, in fact, very much in demand in the church. But just as we saw that the change of the relationship of the Philadelphia motherhouse to the United Lutheran Church did not bring any change of status to the Philadelphia deaconess, so also nothing happened to change the formal status in the church of the Baltimore deaconess.

VI. VOWS

It was pointed out earlier that no vows were required of the Lutheran deaconess in 1918, but that the shadow of monastic vows lay across the deaconess scene and that a kind of dedication to celibacy was expected of the candidate without being required. She had "renounced marriage in her heart."[1] If she did marry, she thereby resigned from the diaconate.

The Baltimore motherhouse had the same view. The constitution of the Board of Deaconess Work defined a deaconess as follows:

> Article VI -- Deaconesses. A Deaconess shall be an unmarried woman or widow of approved fitness and training, who shall serve Christ and the Church according to the general principles of the female diaconate as recognized by the Board.[2]

This expectation of renunciation of marriage continued even though deaconesses left to marry from the very beginning of the diaconate in America. All four of the deaconesses that Fliedner brought to Pittsburgh in 1849 married Americans; three of them married pastors.[1] Those who married pastors certainly did not escape from the obligations of a life of service in church work; but the renunciation of marriage continued to be expected of deaconess candidates.

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[1] Handbook of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses (Philadelphia, 1913), p. 14.

[2] ULCA, 1920, p. 412.

The one change in this area in the years following 1918 was that the eventual marriage of some deaconesses was more and more taken in stride by the motherhouse and the church, and the disapproval with which one saw a deaconess leave to get married abated to the point at which the motherhouse could take a cheerful view of the marriage.

From the standpoint of a later time, it seemed a curious thing to have expected anyone to renounce marriage as such. It seemed to betray a negative view of marriage that was not normative for Lutheranism generally.

The change in attitude toward marriage developed quite slowly. In 1928 it was generally thought among the participants at the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses that the diaconate was a "life vocation."

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[1] Herman L. Fritschel, One Hundred Years of Deaconess Service, 1849-1949, pp. 22-24.

> The difference between trained Christian workers and the deaconess devoting herself to this vocation as her life calling was emphasized. There is a pronounced tendency in certain parts of the Church to confuse the two and to substitute for the traditional conception of the diaconate the trained Christian worker who devotes herself to her work temporarily and for the purpose of self-support.[1]

The first evidence of a new attitude in the Board of Deaconess Work was the approval in 1947 of a form of financial agreement by which a candidate agreed to balance by service or by cash refund the money invested in her education by the Board of Deaconess Work.[2] In this action the possibility that a deaconess would not serve for life because she might leave to marry was acknowledged calmly and publicly and in such a way that a young woman could be relieved of any guilt or moral opprobrium in case she decided to withdraw.

The current attitude in the United Lutheran Church is reflected in the frank contemplation in the catalogue of the deaconess schools of the fact that some deaconess students will marry. "Christian homemaking will undoubtedly be the vocation of many of the young women coming to the deaconess schools."[3] Marriage is fully accepted in this kind of discourse as also a

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[1] Papers and Proceedings, p. 24. [2] BDW, 6/26/47.

[3] Deaconess Schools of the ULCA, Catalogue, 1960-1962, p. 15.

Christian vocation. Protestant young women are not to be encouraged to renounce marriage as such, it seems to imply. What they will do is decide against this or that specific opportunity of marriage. In that, some of them may end up not marrying at all or may not marry for a number of years. Whether they continue in deaconess work then, or become wives and mothers, "the developing of the spiritual life" that their deaconess education was intended to include serves a useful purpose.

No change was made in the United Lutheran Church with respect to the rule that a deaconess was automatically separated from the diaconate when she married.

Obedience. The monastic vow of obedience was also not exacted from the deaconess candidate, but the idea that obedience would be expected was prominent. The deaconess was to be obedient to the rules of the motherhouse and obedient in accepting the assignments of the direction.[1]

Not only the word "obedience," but the very idea disappeared in the course of the period under study, as democratic ideas characteristic of American life established themselves in the diaconate.

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[1] Handbook, Philadelphia Motherhouse, 1913, pp. 77-78.

The process of democratizing the diaconate was well under way early in this period. In 1922 Charles E. Hay, pastor of the Baltimore motherhouse, declared in a paper that the deaconess was not under military obedience. The motherhouse was responsible for answering calls for service and had to give assignments to sisters, but no deaconess was assigned anywhere against her will. On the contrary, her estimate of the kind of situation in which she could serve best was important to the direction as a factor to be considered in giving her an assignment.[1]

The idea of deaconess obedience was natural in a time of the subordination of women, when it was imagined that only men were competent to direct enterprises (other than governments of states in which queens ruled). The idea of obedience seemed to recede without any express rejection of it as deaconesses were gradually accepted in positions of responsibility and administration.

The Directing Sister was given "full and complete authority" in the Baltimore motherhouse by the Board of Deaconess Work in 1940.[2] In 1942 the board voted to prepare women faculty members for four major subject matter fields in the curriculum of the Baltimore school.[1] In 1944 a deaconess was elected executive secretary of the Board of Deaconess Work.[2] In the same year the board made it a matter of policy to provide each motherhouse with a pastor-teacher, but to have a deaconess as the executive and administrative head of each motherhouse it controlled.[3]

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[1] Proceedings, The Fifteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Omaha, October 31-November 2, 1922, pp. 19-22.

[2] BDW, 6/27/40.

The Order for Consecration of a Deaconess did indeed in its 1930 form provide for asking the sister, "Will you adorn your office by a holy life and conversation and willingly obey all rightful authority?"[4] But in the absence of a definition of what "rightful authority" means in this particular case, the question asks no more than might be asked of anyone.

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[1] BDW, 4/21/42. [2] BDW, 1/19/44. [3] BDW, 4/20/44.

[4] The Occasional Services (Philadelphia: Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1930), pp. 119-25.

CHAPTER VIII

CHANGES IN THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH SINCE 1918 (II)

The description of the changes in the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918 is continued with a review of the remuneration of the deaconesses.

I. REMUNERATION

The path of the deaconess lay in the shadow of the monastic vow of poverty as much as in those of celibacy and obedience. It was an invariable aspect of being a deaconess in the United Lutheran Church in 1918 that a woman never expected to be paid for her labors. As a dutiful daughter of the motherhouse, she trusted it to provide for her in health or sickness and in old age. She would always have a home and a little pocket money or allowance besides.

Full maintenance through life plus an allowance does not necessarily mean poverty. But the extreme simplicity of the maintenance and the meagerness of the allowance were often closer to poverty than most persons would think they needed to be. There have been periodic upward revisions of the allowance all through our period, but the major change in this aspect of the conception of the diaconate in the United Lutheran Church has been the recent emergence of the salaried deaconess.

The earliest record of the mention of salaries for deaconesses of the United Lutheran Church is in a minute of the Board of Deaconess Work of 1930. A proposal was made for the establishment of a group of "associate deaconesses" for women who were not free to become regular deaconesses because, for example, of such a family obligation as having a dependent mother. Such an associate deaconess would receive a salary, it was suggested, and have no claim on the motherhouse as a home in times of sickness and retirement. No action was taken on the suggestion.[1]

It was 1946 when the cabinet of secretaries, representing both motherhouses, presented the first draft of a new plan of organization of deaconesses providing for the option of salary in place of maintenance and allowance as well as the optional wearing of the garb and in addition a "deaconess extension corps" of short-term workers. The United Lutheran Church approved the establishment of the class of nongarbed, salaried deaconesses in the fall of 1952,[2] and the first deaconess transferred into the new category in 1953.[3] In 1958 there were twelve salaried, nongarbed deaconesses out of a total force of 190 sisters; nine had transferred from the "cooperative plan" and three had entered preferring the salary plan.[1]

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[1] BDW, 10/23/30. [2] ULCA, 1952, pp. 882b-883.

[3] ULCA, 1954, p. 764a.

It had already been declared by the Board of Deaconess Work that it had adopted the standards set in the statement of Personnel Standards and Practices for Women Church Workers that it had helped to sponsor in 1946,[2] and thus the salary scale to which it was committed was the current scale in the profession or in similar professions.[3] This applied to instances in which the board itself employed a deaconess and to instances in which it provided placement services.

Increases of allowance. The other motif here, that of increasing the deaconesses' allowances as the cost of living went up, appears in comparison to introducing current salary scales to have been a far less adequate procedure. In 1943 the allowances of the Baltimore deaconesses were raised to thirty-five dollars per quarter or $140 per year.[4] They had been less than $100 per year for years. In 1918 allowances paid to forty-five deaconesses came to $3393;[1] in 1920 the expense item was $5859 for sixty-five deaconesses.[2] In the depression the sisters gave up their twenty-five dollar vacation allowances.[3] In 1947 the allowances in Baltimore were raised from $140 to $240 per year.[4]

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[1] ULCA, 1958, p. 796a. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 556b.

[3] Personnel Standards and Practices for Women Church Workers (Philadelphia: Board of Deaconess Work, United Lutheran Church in America, 1946), p. 42.

[4] BDW, 4/29/43.

In 1946 the Philadelphia sisters were receiving twelve to fifteen dollars per month.[5]

There was in all probability a certain amount of comment on the size of the allowance and the acceptability of the maintenance, for it was also reported to the board in 1946 that the Board of Management of the Baltimore motherhouse (a committee of the Board of Deaconess Work) had voted to require all churches employing deaconesses to provide adequate maintenance on a twelve months per year basis; also, all institutional employers were to be required to provide five dollars per month to the deaconess above her maintenance and an additional amount for vacation expenses.[6]

The smallness of the allowances paid to the deaconesses was as much as of anything else a function of the deficit economy of the two motherhouses. At any rate nothing was being said about the nobility of adopting poverty on principle, and there were deficits in both motherhouses. In Philadelphia in 1935, for example, earned income included:[1]

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[1] Proceedings of the Convention, General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the U.S.A., New York, November 12-14, 18, 1918, p. 117.

[2] ULCA, 1928, p. 488. [3] ULCA, 1934, p. 360.

[4] BDW, 1/22/47. [5] BDW, 1/17/46. [6] Ibid.

$15,469.80	from stations served by deaconesses,
2,860.04	from fees paid on entrance to the old people's home operated by the sisters,
15,162.90	from fees paid to the Children's Hospital,
2,864.61	from miscellaneous earnings.
$36,357.35	was the total of earnings.

The allowances paid to and incidental expenses incurred for the 124 deaconesses came to $21,727.56 alone, although that was well under $200 per year per sister. Other expenses of operating the deaconess home and school, home for the aged, and hospital were given as follows:

$ 8,570.00	for salaries
17,187.30	for wages
21,618.12	for household supplies
2,658.34	for repairs and improvements
519.04	for insurance
12,194.55	for miscellaneous expenses.
$62,747.35	total of other expenses.

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[1] The figures are to be found in ULCA, 1936, p. 321.

The total outlay, including the deaconess account, was $84,474.91. Of course there was other income besides the earnings. Mr. Lankenau's endowment of the enterprise produced
$30,219.41 in 1935, various solicitations gathered
4,962.17 and the United Lutheran Church added
2,704.25
$37,885.83 total of other income.

Added to the earnings given above ($36,357.35) these figures yield $74,243.18 of the total income. Set against the total outlay of $84,474.91, the figures indicate a deficit of $10,231.73.

It was the accumulation of such deficits that finally forced the Philadelphia motherhouse to seek an organic relationship with the United Lutheran Church, which led to more substantial budgetary support from the church.

In the same year (1935) the Baltimore motherhouse was also operating at a deficit.[1]

Earned income: $9,882.01 from stations
1,835.67 from non-deaconess tuitions
1,700.48 from kindergarten, nursing
$13,418.16 total earnings.

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[1] Ibid.

The two sets of figures for Philadelphia and Baltimore are not comparable at every point, but approximating the Philadelphia rubrics as much as possible, the expenses at the Baltimore mother-house were:

$11,662.59	for deaconess allowances, other expense
2,800.00	salary
3,642.01	wages
3,815.21	repairs and improvements
429.39	insurance
7,086.35	miscellaneous expenses
5,413,20	food, heat, light
$34,848.75	Total of expenses.

Again solvency was entirely dependent on non-earned items. There were various rents, interest, and bonds sold amounting to

$2,956.52	
4,460.46	from various contributions
15,345,75	from the United Lutheran Church
$22,762.73	Total of other income.

Added to the earnings of the deaconesses given above, these items yielded $36,180.89 altogether. Set against the total outlay of $34,848.75, the figures indicate a favorable balance of $1,332.14.

The difference between the United Lutheran Church contributions in the two cases (to Philadelphia, $2,704.25 and to Baltimore, $15,345.75) was due to the fact that the United Lutheran Church owned the Baltimore motherhouse, whereas the Philadelphia motherhouse was controlled by a self-perpetuating board of trustees.

II. THE GARB OR UNIFORM, AND TITLE

It has been indicated above that the garb was a conspicuous outward sign of the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in 1918, that it was obligatory for the deaconess to wear it, and that there were a number of reasons offered for requiring it to be worn. The changes that have occurred since 1918 have been several modifications of the style of the garb, but chiefly the acceptance of the nongarbed deaconess.

The discussion of the garb keeps recurring in the sources. Sometimes it is the deaconesses who bring it up, sometimes other elements in the church. In the early years it was always a question of modernizing it. In the time of short, narrow skirts and cloche hats in the 1920's, the deaconesses looked like the woman on the old Dutch Cleanser can, with their ankle-length full skirts and their white bonnets with big starched bows under the chin. The problem was to make the garb more attractive, or at least less conspicuous. The deaconesses' comfort was a factor in the discussions, but so was the effect of unattractive and conspicuous garbs on potential deaconess recruits.

Sister Sophia Jepson, the directing sister at the Baltimore motherhouse, argued before the Conference of Motherhouses in 1920 that the garb was conspicuous and that the women wanted in the diaconate were not of a kind to dress conspicuously.[1] Not everyone favored making concessions of this sort to potential recruits. There was the attitude that unattractive aspects of the diaconate tested the unselfishness of a woman's motives for inclining toward the diaconate and screened out the unworthy aspirant.

> People who are not willing to place the service of the Lord first and above all personal likes and dislikes, who are not determined to shrink from no personal sacrifice wherever the service demands it, are not wanted for the diaconate because they are not fit for it.[2]

In 1920 the sisters' council at Baltimore was discussing how the garb might be changed.[3] In 1926 the Board of Deaconess Work authorized the directing sister at the Baltimore motherhouse to make some undisclosed, minor changes in the garb (probably to shorten the skirt, for one thing).[4] In 1929 the Baltimore sisters were asked by the Board of Deaconess Work to modify their head-dress in severe weather, in order to afford themselves more protection.[1] A woman board member spoke to the board in 1939 about the desirability of modifying the garb in order to attract more young women of the South, and a committee was formed to study the garb.[2] The committee recommended that the question of the style of the garb be referred to the deaconesses in the two motherhouses.[3]

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[1] Proceedings, p. 42.

[2] Sister Julia Mergner, in Proceedings, Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, 1922, p. 33.

[3] BDW, 11/9/20. [4] BDW, 6/22/26.

The earliest evidence in the United Lutheran Church that not only were the modernity and attractiveness of the garb but its very continuance under discussion is seen in a recommendation of a research commission, which was adopted by the Board of Deaconess Work in 1942, to the effect that the garb, as well as the allowance (in lieu of salary) and the motherhouse, should be retained.[4]

The Baltimore motherhouse recommended to the Board of Deaconess Work in 1942 that a joint committee appointed by the two motherhouses review the garb.[5] The Board of Deaconess Work in 1944 decided that the style of the garb should be referred to the two directing sisters, the field secretary, and the executive secretary of the Board of Deaconess Work.[1]

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[1] BDW, 1/22/29. [2] BDW, 10/26/39. [3] BDW, 3/1/40.

[4] ULCA, 1944, pp. 401-02. [5] BDW, 4/21/42.

In the course of its report to the United Lutheran Church in 1944, the Board of Deaconess Work indicated that it had been preparing non-deaconess, nongarbed parish workers in its Baltimore school since 1911, and that it had had more candidates for the parish worker course in the preceding biennium (1942-44) than for the deaconess course. As far as subject matter was concerned, the two courses were nearly identical. The board also reported that beginning in September 1944, the Philadelphia school would again open its doors to non-deaconess students.[2] Possibly in response to this report, the United Lutheran Church, adopting a motion made from the floor, "requested [the Board of Deaconess Work] to consider some modification of the deaconess garb."[3] Thereupon the Baltimore sisters' council recommended to the Board of Deaconess Work that a professional designer be commissioned to submit a new uniform for the sisters' approval.[4] A new design was showed to the board in 1945,[5] but evidently the Philadelphia deaconesses did not favor it, for in 1946 a joint committee representing the two motherhouses reported to the board that two new garbs had been adopted by the two sisterhoods. The board concurred, but recommended that the committee continue its study and ultimately propose one garb for both motherhouses. It was reported at the same meeting that all deaconesses to be invested in Philadelphia would be required to wear the new Philadelphia uniform, but that deaconesses who were already invested would be free to retain the older design.[1]

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[1] BDW, 1/19/44. [2] ULCA, 1944, p. 406. [3] _Ibid_., p. 420.

[4] BDW, 10/25/44. [5] BDW, 9/7/45.

The process of modernizing the garb was now overtaken by the movement to make the wearing of the uniform a matter of deaconess choice. The cabinet of secretaries presented to the board a plan for an expanded diaconate in which there would be both garbed and nongarbed deaconesses.[2] The board approved the plan in principle and asked the cabinet of secretaries to work out the details.[3] The detailed plan was given to the sisters for study before final action by the board. In the meantime the joint deaconess committee on the garb had agreed on a common uniform for the two motherhouses -- the Baltimore black dress with minor changes, a simple, modish, black dress, with an open, white-lined collar.[4]

Moving cautiously, the Board of Deaconess Work committee on a comprehensive program for the expansion of the diaconate undertook in 1950 to survey the opinion of 190 male and female leaders in the United Lutheran Church on various aspects of deaconess work. On the question of the garb, the committee found among its ninety-seven respondents that sixty per cent were ready to see a more liberal practice established, giving greater liberty to the deaconesses themselves to decide when to wear the garb.[1] The same report asserted that "a good many replies" had indicated the diaconate as "in part outmoded and in need of further modernization. This criticism applies in part to the garb, in part to the 'too European or old-world' atmosphere and tradition of the diaconate."[2] On the other hand, respondents found the following values in the garb: it provided protection to the deaconess, it had a certain fitness to her work and churchliness, it served to introduce the wearer as a church worker, and it conferred prestige on the wearer.[3]

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[1] BDW, 4/25/46. [2] BDW, 4/25/46. [3] ULCA, 1946, p. 540a.

[4] BDW, 1/23/47.

When the United Lutheran Church was given the question to decide in 1952, it voted to adopt the recommendation of the Board of Deaconess Work that "there shall be garbed and non-garbed deaconesses, each young woman deciding which she prefers to be."[4] At the same time it was decided that nongarbed deaconesses would be salaried, rather than on an allowance, but that in every other respect the two groups of deaconesses would be treated alike.

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[1] ULCA, 1950, p. 692. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

[4] ULCA, 1952, pp. 882b-83.

The first nongarbed, salaried deaconess chose to transfer to the new arrangement in 1953.[1]

Title

Thus far changes adopted with reference to the garb and salary seem not to have affected the use of the titles "deaconess" and "sister." Usage continues to be "Sister Mary" in direct address, and "Sister Mary Smith" in the third person; the use of the term "sister(s)" in the third person, without mention of the name, as interchangeable with "deaconess(es)" ("the sisters have arrived") seems to have diminished over a long period.

III. SEPARATION

The topic, the separation of a deaconess from the sisterhood, includes both the process of her being dismissed and the manner of her withdrawing.

No major change in either matter since 1918 is visible in the records. Deaconesses continued to get married and continued to exclude themselves from the diaconate by so doing. The rule that they should discuss the question with the pastor and the directing sister before acting was not repealed and presumably was complied with in most cases. There were other reasons why deaconesses withdrew, such as a wish to pursue a different vocation, or a request from her family that a deaconess return to them, but there had always been such reasons given.

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[1] ULCA, 1954, p. 764a.

A new reason for withdrawing that developed in the period since 1918 was the wish to pursue further education. A deaconess applied for "severance" in 1925 in order to "seek further preparation for religious educational work" and it was granted.[1] The necessity of leaving the diaconate for such a reason was an anomaly that was not lost on the officials in charge, and this matter will be considered again in connection with the developments in deaconess education in the United Lutheran Church since 1918.

The matter of dismissing candidates and probationers underwent no formal change. In 1935 the Board of Deaconess Work adopted a resolution to the effect that:

> The motherhouse reserves the right to release a candidate at any time after reception at the motherhouse in the event that it becomes clearly evident that she cannot qualify as a deaconess by reason of physical or other conditions.[2]

There is the merest hint here of an increased awareness of mental health reasons for dismissing some candidates, but actually the statement only makes explicit again what had been understood to be the right of the motherhouse from the beginning.[1]

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[1] BDW, 10/27/25. [2] BDW, 6/27/35.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE MOTHERHOUSE

In the description of the status quo in 1918 in the previous chapter, the motherhouse was characterized as a school, a church, and a home. It will be convenient to discuss the changes that occurred since 1918 under the same headings.

The motherhouse has continued to function as a school in the years since 1918. Its role as a school has on the whole increased in scope and importance. The major elements in that story are to be told below, in the account of deaconess education in the United Lutheran Church since 1918.

The motherhouse as a church. The idea of the motherhouse as a local congregation of the United Lutheran Church continued to be an important one in the earlier years of the period of this study. It was seen that the Philadelphia deaconesses were a local church belong to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania of the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918. The Baltimore deaconesses took up this pattern in 1920 when the thirty-nine sisters there organized as a local congregation of the Maryland Synod of the United Lutheran Church.[1] The Board of Deaconess Work affirmed it as its policy as late as 1939 that each sister belonged to her motherhouse congregation as of her consecration.[2] As long as this relationship continued in effect, the motherhouse pastor continued to have a pastoral responsibility for each consecrated deaconess wherever she was stationed, and along with it something of the paterfamilias relationship and responsibility as well. However, both of these relationships seem to have appeared less and less necessary and appropriate as the period under survey wore on and the view of the woman as always subordinate and of the deaconess as the child of the motherhouse wore away. When the Board of Deaconess Work voted to establish the directing sister as the executive head of the Baltimore motherhouse,[3] the end of an era had come. It followed naturally that the motherhouse congregations were liquidated, and the deaconesses became members of whatever parishes it was in which they found their residences.[4]

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[1] Emil Wacker, The Deaconess Calling, Its Past and Its Present, trans. Emma A. Endlich (Philadelphia: Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, 1893), p. 75.

The motherhouse as a home. The story of the developments connected with the conception of the motherhouse as a home is somewhat more complex. It will be seen that the motherhouse began to be called into question, just as the garb and the allowance system were, but that some more justifications for it were found. In the earlier years of the period of this study the deaconess leadership in the United Lutheran Church, mostly masculine, was marked by an eagerness to be faithful to the letter of the "law" as laid down by Fliedner, the father of the modern diaconate. The later years, however, saw Fliedner as an innovator and saw shrewd innovation as the better part of fidelity to his spirit. In the earlier years the motherhouse idea was taken for granted or praised in superlatives. In the later years it was called upon to prove itself.[1]

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[1] BDW, 11/9/20. [2] BDW, 6/22/39.

[3] BDW, 6/27/40; reaffirmed as general policy, BDW, 10/25/44.

[4] ULCA, 1950, p. 695a; 1956, p. 887a.

In the previous chapter the motherhouse was described as the home it was in 1918 in terms of its demand for obedience, its structure as an authority for the deaconesses, its role in the placement of the deaconess as a worker and in concern for her protection and well-being while working at home or at a distant field of labor, while well or sick, in vigor or retirement, and as the stable structure within which the fellowship of the sisterhood could develop and do its supportive work. The decline of obedience is recounted in the section on the vows, and the sisterhood will be discussed in the section to follow the present one.

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[1] Cf. papers read to Lutheran Deaconess Conference, passim in Papers and Proceedings.

It is changes in the structure of the motherhouse authority and in its protective work for the deaconesses that will be discussed in this place.

The motherhouse structure. The major change in respect to the motherhouse structure was the passing of the pastor-superintendent. It was a distinct break with Fliedner's pattern (and, some veterans of the work thought, with the Scriptures themselves) to permit a woman, the directing sister, to inherit the responsibility of being the "executive and administrative head" of the motherhouse.[1] There were many in those days who thought that the subordination of women was divinely ordained.[2] However, as other members of the Board of Deaconess Work saw it, women had too long been trained for subordinate positions only,[3] and in the future women were bound to take the direction of the diaconate more and more into their own hands.[4]

Motherhouse protection. There is something appealing, even though archaically paternalistic, in the picture of the motherhouse reaching out in the person of its pastor to protect the deaconess who was in danger of being exploited on a distant scene.

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[1] BDW, 4/20/44.

[2] Vide BDW, 4/19/45: a former motherhouse pastor protests the action and begs the Board of Deaconess Work to reconsider in the light of God's Word.

[3] BDW, 1/17/46. [4] BDW, 6/27/40.

This kind of protectiveness quietly disappeared in the recent period, when the propriety of a woman's speaking up in her own defense was granted and written job descriptions became routine and the Board of Deaconess Work called attention to its published statement, Personnel Standards and Practices for Women Church Workers (1946).

By the same token, a change had come over placement procedures by the end of the third decade of the period of this study. No longer could it merely be said that the deaconess's preferences were consulted when she was to be placed.

> The deaconess herself is free not only to accept or to decline calls on her own responsibility, but also to take the initiative in seeking a suitable field of service when a change becomes personally imperative or desirable.[1]

This in turn was somewhat tempered when the Board of Deaconess Work declared to the United Lutheran Church in 1952:

> The motherhouses act for the Board of Deaconess Work as placement agencies. Any deaconess may accept a call directly from an employing agency, subject to the approval of her motherhouse acting as an agent of the board.[2]

There continued to be something very pertinent in the other kind of protection that the motherhouse represented, as a friendly harbor in times of loneliness, a rest home in times of illness and recuperation, and a retirement home. For all who worked for plain subsistence as the deaconesses did, there had to be a home such as the motherhouse to fall back upon. It was natural that the motherhouse would come into question along with the garb and the allowance system when various committees were concerned to think of ways of modernizing the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church. Unless salaries could be introduced so as to be effective retroactively, however, there would still have to be a motherhouse for the deaconesses who had already lived for some time on the allowance system and had no other retirement plan.

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[1] Board of Deaconess Work policy, reported to the United Lutheran Church. ULCA, 1950, p. 695a.

[2] ULCA, 1952, p. 885b.

The first commission to consider whether the motherhouse as it existed in the United Lutheran Church was expendable recommended that the Board of Deaconess Work retain the garb, the allowance, and the motherhouse.[1] When the current pattern of deaconess organization came into effect, bringing nongarbed, salaried deaconesses into being in the United Lutheran Church, the motherhouse continued to have a significant role even for them, not only as their school, but as a home, that is, as a fellowship center, as still something of an authority contending for high standards of life, and as a retirement home the maintenance of which they were willing to help to underwrite.[1] A recent formula has summarized it this way:

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[1] BDW, 4/21/42.

> The deaconess motherhouses are maintained as an organizational structure for the community of deaconesses, both resident and non-resident, in order to provide a central authority representative in character and responsible to the Church through the Board of Deaconess Work. Each motherhouse is a home and training center. It affords each deaconess a voice and vote in its organization. It operates on a communal economic basis and it furnishes an organization for the intensive cultivation of the spiritual life of the deaconess.[2]

V. THE ROLE OF THE SISTERHOOD

The changes in connection with the sisterhood in the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church since 1918 were slight and subtle. There has been some gain in respect to democratic process, and there has been a just noticeable recovery of appreciation of the religious values of life in community.

With regard to gains of status by the sisterhood, there are two kinds of evidence. One has to do with small gains of prerogative by the sisterhood as a formal group. Thus the sisterhoods got control of garb design in the period of this study. At the start of the period the garb was still where Fliedner left it, in the style of the nineteenth century. The motherhouse authorities had kept it as it had been. But as the objections to the garb increased and modernizing it began to be discussed, the question was more and more referred to the sisterhoods,[1] and it was the sisterhoods that approved the more recent changes.[2]

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[1] ULCA, 1952, p. 885b.

[2] Statement of the Board of Deaconess Work to the United Lutheran Church. ULCA, 1952, p. 885b.

The other kind of gain of power by the sisterhoods was less direct and formal. It was the accession of individual deaconesses to positions in the power structure of the diaconate that had not been open to deaconesses previously and where at long last the deaconess point of view could be expressed directly. Thus a deaconess became a staff member for recruitment of the Board of Deaconess Work in 1943;[3] another became the executive secretary of the board in 1944.[4] Each directing sister ought to be the "executive and administrative head" of her motherhouse according to Board of Deaconess Work policy adopted in 1944;[5] and three deaconesses were listed as members of the Board of Deaconess Work by the end of 1944.[6] The directing sister of the Baltimore motherhouse was made executive head of the house by the Board of Deaconess Work in 1940,[7] and the directing sister of the Philadelphia motherhouse was reported as executive head of her house in 1948.[1]

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[1] BDW, 3/1/40. [2] BDW, 10/25/44; 4/25/46; 1/23/47.

[3] BDW, 7/29/43. [4] BDW, 1/19/44. [5] BDW, 4/20/44.

[6] ULCA, 1944, p. 458. [7] BDW, 6/27/40.

Community life. A kind of rediscovery of facilities for spiritual life in the life of communities has been characteristic of our present time. The French Protestant monastic brotherhood of Taizé has attracted Protestant attention. Various sisterhoods for women of the Episcopal Church have enjoyed some growth. Religious communities like Iona in Scotland have seemed to some to recover for them a lost dimension of life. Thus when the motherhouse as the sisters' home began to be called into question, along with the garb and the allowance system, in the 1940's, there was not only the consequence that some persons wanted to make it optional or do away with it altogether eventually, but there was also the consequence that others came to its defense and pointed out that it offered induplicable opportunities. Thus Sister Anna Ebert, in an address at the Lutheran Deaconess Conference in 1951, said:

> The heightened religious life and the Christian fellowship as the major apology for the motherhouse existence should be one of the prime reasons for its promulgation today. . . . Religious communities are thus able to afford a churchly training such as is not easily found elsewhere. . . . I would list the home and family life of the motherhouse organization as one of the

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[1] BDW, 4/22/48.

> greatest sources of satisfaction for single women in the service of the Church.[1]

There is one sense in which the sisterhood became a more important aspect of the motherhouse in the recent period than it had ever been before -- with the passing of the pastor-superintendent from the motherhouse scene, there was a fading of the authoritarian frame of reference according to which the deaconess had been seen primarily in the relationship of the child in the home. The field was clear for that other, freer kind of relationship, that had always been present, of the deaconess as sister and peer of every other deaconess.

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[1] *Proceedings*, Lutheran Deaconess Conference, Philadelphia, 1951, p. 35.

CHAPTER IX

CHANGES IN THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH SINCE 1918 (III)

The account of the changes in the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918 continues with a discussion of changes affecting the role of the diaconate in the life of the church.

I. THE ROLE OF THE FEMALE DIACONATE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH, ITS GOVERNMENT, AND MEANS OF SUPPORT

There has been no formal change in the definition of the female diaconate or of its role in the life of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918. Deaconesses have qualified to perform new kinds of service in the church, new standards and procedures have been adopted by the Board of Deaconess Work, and budgets have been changed, but none of this has affected the general principles of church and diaconate in their relationships with each other.

The status of the diaconate in the sense of its prestige in the church has been advanced. This is connected as much as with anything else with the accreditation of deaconess undergraduate education and the increasing achievement by deaconesses of graduate and professional degrees. But there has been no change of the deaconesses' formal, ecclesiastical status; the definitions of a deaconess and of the diaconate remained what they had been.

The two developments that have come closest to requiring a qualification of the foregoing statement are (1) the creation of an organic relationship between the United Lutheran Church and the Philadelphia motherhouse, which did modify the government and means of support of a part of the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church, and (2) the movement toward an "expanded deaconess fellowship."

It has already been seen that the Baltimore motherhouse enjoyed the status of a deliberate creation of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America from its foundation in 1895 until the General Synod joined in the merger that produced the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918, when the motherhouse became the property and responsibility of the United Lutheran Church. Throughout the succeeding sixty-five years, the church has administered this responsibility through the Board of Deaconess Work, an elective board of the church, and the church has supported the work by an allocation in its annual budget. Nothing fundamental or formal has changed in all this throughout the period covered in this study.

The Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses stood in a quite different relationship to the General Council of the Evangelical

Lutheran Church in North America and to the United Lutheran Church in America for most of its history. According to the directions and will of John D. Lankenau who founded and endowed it, the Philadelphia motherhouse was linked in its corporate title and in its property with the Mary J. Drexel Home, a home for aged persons. The double institution had its own self-perpetuating board of trustees. The United Lutheran Church, like the General Council before it, acknowledged the institution as useful, and furthermore contributed toward its support through its Board of Deaconess Work. On the other hand, the United Lutheran Church did not feel the same sense of responsibility for it as for an institution it owned, such as the Baltimore motherhouse. Thus in a typical year near the mid-point of the period under review, 1935, the United Lutheran Church contributed $18,050 to the Board of Deaconess Work budget at a time when the total expenses of the Board of Deaconess Work (mostly for the Baltimore motherhouse) were $37,553.[1] In the same year the Board of Deaconess Work in the name of the United Lutheran Church contributed $2,704 to the Philadelphia motherhouse, which had a total outlay of $84,475.[2]

The Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of

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[1] ULCA, 1936, pp. 322-23.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 321. Cf. section on Remuneration, *supra*.

Deaconesses had a deficit in 1935 of over $10,000.[1] It had a long series of such deficits as it was caught between rising costs (some of them for extra-mural education of deaconesses) and a declining income from endowments and especially from patients, one deficit going as high as $25,000 in one year.[2] It was these deficits that prompted the start of a series of negotiations with the United Lutheran Church[3] that led eventually to the working out of an agreement in 1947 according to which the Board of Management of the Philadelphia motherhouse was virtually elected by the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church, and the motherhouse could look to the church for a more generous annual grant.[4]

The terms of the relationship were described in the report of the Board of Deaconess Work to the United Lutheran Church in 1948:

> The Board of Deaconess Work nominates five persons to serve regular terms on the Board of Trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses. This latter board covenants to elect these nominees to its own membership and at the same time to appoint them on the Board of Management of the Philadelphia motherhouse. A sixth person is added by the Board of Trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home to the Board of Management and from these six the Chairman is

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[1] *Ibid*. [2] In 1930. BDW, 1/22/31. [3] BDW, 6/19/46.

[4] BDW, 1/3/47; 1/23/47.

> elected by the appointing board. In this way the Board of Deaconess Work controls the selection of personnel on the Board of Management of the Philadelphia Motherhouse and the administration of the Motherhouse is related organically through the Board of Deaconess Work to the United Lutheran Church.
>
> The organic relationship obviously includes direct representation from the Board of Deaconess Work on the Board of Trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses.
>
> The ownership of the Philadelphia Motherhouse together with its related institutions (Children's Hospital, Home for the Aged) remains as before, in the hands of the Board of Trustees of the Mary J. Drexel Home and Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses under the will of Mr. Lankenau.
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> . . . .
>
> Reduced to the simplest terms the present provisions mean that the Board of Management of each Motherhouse functions as a committee of the Board of Deaconess Work.[1]

The difference that this new relationship to the United Lutheran Church made to the Philadelphia motherhouse in its financing appears in these figures. The total contribution of the United Lutheran Church to the Board of Deaconess Work in the year 1945-46 (July through June) was $47,700. Of this amount, $7,950 was assigned to the Philadelphia motherhouse as a voluntary contribution.[2] In 1946-47 the total United Lutheran Church contribution to the Board of Deaconess Work was $58,000, of which

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[1] ULCA, 1948, p. 630. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 560.

$23,447 was allocated to the Philadelphia motherhouse.[1] In 1947-48 the Board of Deaconess Work received $82,974 from the church, of which $33,559 went to the Philadelphia motherhouse.[2] In 1948-49 the church awarded $85,000 to the Board of Deaconess Work, of which $37,585 was received by the Philadelphia motherhouse.[3]

It is impossible to derive from figures like these all the formulas that went into calculating them. Two things are clear, however: (1) after the new relationship took effect the Philadelphia motherhouse received more support from the church, and (2) it was the intention of the United Lutheran Church through the Board of Deaconess Work in adding to the funds for the Philadelphia motherhouse to eliminate the deficits of the Philadelphia institution.[4]

The real point to be made in connection with the change of status of the Philadelphia motherhouse in the United Lutheran Church is that it involved no change of the definition of the diaconate as a vocation in the church for any of the deaconesses. Before the change, when the Philadelphia deaconesses were educated by a private corporation and consecrated under the auspices of just one local congregation within the United Lutheran Church, they had exactly the same kind of status and recognition in the United Lutheran Church as was enjoyed by the Baltimore deaconesses, who were trained and consecrated by the United Lutheran Church, acting through its own Board of Deaconess Work. The gain for the Philadelphia motherhouse was in financial solvency and in its prospects for being able to carry on. The gain for the United Lutheran Church was that it acquired a more direct government of the portion of the diaconate attached to the Philadelphia motherhouse. It should have become easier hereby, at least theoretically, to install a unified educational program for the whole diaconate of the United Lutheran Church.

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[1] ULCA, 1948, p. 639. [2] Ibid., p. 641.

[3] ULCA, 1950, pp. 705-06. [4] ULCA, 1948, p. 639.

The expanded deaconess fellowship. The development of what was called "the expanded deaconess fellowship" seemed to contain within itself the promise of redefining the idea of the diaconate, but so far it has stopped short of fulfilling the promise.

The idea of the expanded deaconess fellowship was first proposed in a meeting of the Board of Deaconess Work in 1946.[1] At that time it was a suggestion from the cabinet of secretaries of a four-fold diaconate including in its divisions (1) the current traditional diaconate, (2) a diaconate of more modernly uniformed women who remained in the motherhouse economic cooperative (the allowance system), (3) a diaconate for the members of which the uniform was at all times optional and salaried positions were provided but the deaconess pattern was otherwise unchanged, and (4) a "deaconess extension corps," women who signed up for limited enlistments, but who were nonetheless to be regarded as members of the deaconess fellowship. The Board of Deaconess Work approved in principle the proposal of garbed and nongarbed deaconesses and asked the cabinet of secretaries to work out the details.[1]

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[1] BDW, 4/25/46.

An interesting fact about this proposal was that it seemed to trigger a flow of imaginative thought and talk about the diaconate that hinted at the emergence of a new and far broader and freer conception of the deaconess. Thus in the same year the Board of Deaconess Work was already reporting to the United Lutheran Church that:

> The deaconess fellowship is viewed as including all young women prepared for service in the Motherhouse Schools or under the direction of the Board of Deaconess Work. The "deaconess" is a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. A deaconess is not created by a ceremony or a garb.[2]

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[1] BDW, 6/19/46. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 540b.

In 1947 it was reported to the Board of Deaconess Work that the sisters would have an opportunity to study the new plan before it was brought to the board for action.[1] Nor were the deaconesses themselves reluctant to accept the broader and freer idea of the diaconate. The general secretary reported to the board in 1948 that the thought of an expanded deaconess fellowship embracing commissioned women workers and even volunteer church workers had been well received both by deaconesses and by non-deaconess women church workers.[2]

In 1950 answers to a questionnaire sent by a committee of the Board of Deaconess Work to men and women church leaders indicated widespread support for the meetings of the Council of Women (an annual convocation to which all women in full time church service in the United Lutheran Church were invited) and seemed to favor the hinted suggestion that the Council might be thought of as an expanded deaconess fellowship.[3] Thus some respondents favored the wearing of a deaconess fellowship pin by all women in full time church work in the United Lutheran Church.[4] But there were no proposals in this vein made by the board's committee.

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[1] BDW, 1/23/47. [2] BDW, 6/24/48. [3] ULCA, 1950, p. 692b.

[4] Ibid.

The considerable interest and concern for the commissioning of full time women workers in the church also became closely related to the desire for an expansion of the diaconate. The interest in commissioning had originated in the Council of Women, but it had been taken up by the "committee on the study and preparation of a comprehensive program for the expansion of the diaconate" of the Board of Deaconess Work. Meeting whatever standards were set up for commissioning and then being commissioned would correspond for non-deaconess women church workers to the consecration of the deaconesses and would provide a basis for linking the consecrated and the commissioned together in a larger deaconess fellowship. Thus it was the board's committee on the expansion of the diaconate that prepared recommendations for the commissioning and installation of women in full time church occupations and for the installation of deaconesses for presentation to the United Lutheran Church.[1]

When the expanded deaconess fellowship was presented to the United Lutheran Church by the Board of Deaconess Work in 1952, however, it was limited to a matter of making room in the diaconate for salaried and nongarbed deaconesses.[2] The cooperative economic system of the motherhouse was to be retained for those who preferred it. Any deaconess could transfer into a salaried or salaried-and-nongarbed category. For the rest, the deaconesses would continue to be entirely equal in their rights and obligations. Provision was also made for non-deaconess alumnae of the deaconess schools and other full time women church workers to enter the diaconate as garbed or nongarbed deaconesses. However, in order to be considered, applicants would have to "conform to the prevailing age limit for candidates," apply within a specified time, be approved by the Board of Deaconess Work, and make up for any educational deficiencies through appropriate achievements and service.[1] The United Lutheran Church accepted the new arrangements.[2]

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[1] ULCA, 1950, p. 694a. [2] ULCA, 1952, pp. 882-84.

The momentum toward a broader diaconate was not exhausted now by this relatively moderate expansion of the diaconate. In 1954 the church voted, on the motion of the Board of Deaconess Work,

> . . . that the Board of Deaconess Work be authorized to develop a plan whereby many aspects of the fellowship, now enjoyed by those who are members of the diaconate, may be offered to other women who are in the full-time service of the Church . . .[3]

However, no such plan has yet been reported.

In the meantime the Board of Deaconess Work organized another departure reminiscent of the "deaconess extension corps" that was part of the original suggestion for expansion of the diaconate in 1946. Authorized as an experiment by the United Lutheran Church in 1956,[1] the program called for women who would enlist for just one year of deaconess service and who subsequently became known as "AIDS" (Associates In Deaconess Service). There were thirty of them in the first year (1957-58). They represented a wide range of academic and professional experience and lack of it, but all were placeable in parishes, welfare institutions, or social service agencies. The Board of Deaconess Work provided them with a three-weeks orientation session, including three fifteen-hour courses in Bible, Lutheran faith and practice, and Interpersonal Relations. A bond of fellowship was developed among the volunteers in the orientation period and morale was buttressed throughout the year by newsletters, visits, and counseling by the director of the AIDS program on the staff of the board. The experiment is to be continued into 1960 before a formal evaluation is made, but the preliminary reactions were reported to the church in 1958 as favorable.[2]

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[1] ULCA, 1952, p. 884a. [2] Ibid., pp. 890a, 911.

[3] ULCA, 1954, p. 781.

As far as the movement toward an expanded deaconess fellowship has come to date, it has not yet affected the conception of the diaconate profoundly; on the other hand, it may be said to continue to give promise of doing so.

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[1] ULCA, 1956, pp. 888b, 903. [2] ULCA, 1958, pp. 792-93.

Thus, for example, establishing the group known as the AIDS may be thought of as raising a question about the definition of the diaconate. Can a woman engage in diaconic service for one year? If so, it cannot be part of the definition of the diaconate that it includes only those who consider their work for the church a life-time calling. It is true, on the one hand, that the AIDS are carefully not called "deaconesses," but "associates in deaconess service;" yet on the other hand they are given the promise in the announcement of the program that "after the diaconic year of service each volunteer shall be welcomed into an informal, continuing fellowship of deaconesses, in which she may keep alive her service experience."[1] Such a statement does seem to liberalize the use of the term deaconess, almost to the point of making it a kind of generic term for women who are working or have worked for the church.

Again, making the garb and the cooperative economic system optional for the deaconesses cannot be said to have altered the essential nature of the diaconate, for most spokesmen of deaconess work had been saying for years that the garb and allowance were "externals."[2] Nevertheless, making them optional did at least seem to raise the question whether the definition of the diaconate had been changed and involved the Board of Deaconess Work in a sense of obligation to say what was essential to the diaconate and what was not. The statement of the board in 1954 on the essential marks of the deaconess was as follows:

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[1] ULCA, 1956, p. 883b.

[2] ULCA, 1954, p. 761a; Proceedings of Lutheran Deaconess Conference, passim.

> First, she is committed to the exclusive occupation of serving others with the single motivation of the love of Christ our Savior. Secondly, she belongs to a fellowship of likeminded persons which provides its members spiritual guidance, mutual encouragement, and moral support, loving care in illness and in their days of retirement. Thirdly, she is formally educated and trained, and throughout her life she serves, according to defined standards administered for the Church by this Board through the agency of the motherhouse in whose fellowship she belongs.[1]

This statement presents difficulties, the chief of which is that taken literally it seems to broaden the conception of the diaconate more than the board or the church were willing to let it be broadened in practice. Thus, the first point speaks about the other-serving nature of the deaconess's work and her religious motivation; but it is plain, as the deaconess would be the first to admit, that other women are altogether her peers in these respects. The very same assertions about work and motivations could have been made with equal generality and fairness about the members of the Council of Women in full time service in the United Lutheran Church.

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[1] ULCA, 1954, p. 761b.

The second point speaks about the deaconess's belonging to a fellowship of like-minded persons which is in a position to care for her in illness and old age. The reference is to the motherhouse. But it is not obvious why any fellowship of women church workers (such as the Council of Women) might not organize facilities for the convalescense and retirement of its members if it cared to. The council was already supplying its members with some "spiritual guidance, mutual encouragement, and moral support" through annual meetings or retreats. Why was the provision of a certain kind of physical care an essential differentia of the diaconate? But if it was an essential mark, would not the simple physical provision of facilities for the care of its members in illness and old age have made the council that much more nearly a diaconate?

The third part of the statement of the essentials of the deaconess calling asserts that deaconess education and deaconess service are governed by "defined standards" administered for the church by the Board of Deaconess Work through the motherhouses. But what of other women church workers whose education and service conform to the same standards? Surely there were many such in the membership of the Council of Women. Furthermore the phrase indicating that the deaconess serves "throughout her life" does not help us find the differentia of the deaconess; for we have seen that very distinguished deaconesses did sometimes marry and equally often members of the Council of Women did not marry and worked until retirement. It again becomes a question whether all the latter would not be deaconesses in fact, if only the Council of Women were to provide a home for members' convalescence and retirement.

The only conclusion to be drawn at this point is that the statement of the Board of Deaconess Work about the essentials of the diaconate given above, judged by the board's evident intentions, was defective. If it had been intended as a new definition of the diaconate, and if it had been taken seriously as such in the church, the consequences ought to have been momentous. But since it was evidently intended to be merely a restatement of the consensus of opinion and was not taken literally, the effective working definition of the diaconate in the United Lutheran Church was not in fact changed. Nevertheless, questions had been raised about the definition of the diaconate, and they may yet lead the way to change.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FEMALE DIACONATE TO OTHER TYPES OF WOMEN'S FULL TIME CHURCH WORK

It has been seen in earlier chapters that the practical working definitions of "deaconess" and "deaconess work" at the beginning of the period under study were drawn within rigid limits. To the Board of Deaconess Work, deaconess work was parish work, institutional work, and occasionally private duty nursing, when they were done by deaconesses.[1] According to the Philadelphia Handbook, there were "Nursing Sisters, Teaching Sisters, and Parish Sisters."[2] (Most nursing sisters and all teaching sisters were also thought of as institutional sisters.) Not any kind of work provided it was done by a deaconess was deaconess work, because even the idea of a deaconess as an overseas missionary was excludable at the time.[3] And it was not thought that deaconess work was parish work and institutional work, regardless of who did them; it was not necessarily these even provided they were done under church auspices and with churchly motivation. To be deaconess work, it had to be a work that deaconesses had done from the nineteenth century beginnings, and it had to be done by a woman who had been publicly designated a deaconess.

In the years following 1918 the kinds of work done by deaconesses became more diversified, as will be noted more fully in the following section, on the work deaconesses have been doing. But it must be said here that various kinds of work both professional and non-professional that were useful to churches and church agencies and institutions recruited devoted non-deaconess personnel in far larger numbers in this period than they recruited deaconesses. Thus, for example, in 1944 when the two motherhouses counted 161 deaconesses in their combined active working force,[1] the names of 446 women church workers (including deaconesses) were found in the course of an effort to invite all eligible women to the first Council of Women who were full time church workers of the United Lutheran Church.[2] In 1958 the United Lutheran Church Commission for Study of Women's Work could find twelve hundred full time women workers employed by the church, its congregations, and its agencies.[3] This included the deaconesses, who in 1957 were numbering 118 active workers.[4]

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[1] BDW, 6/22/21. [2] Edition of 1913, p. 13. [3] BDW, 6/22/21.

The point here is that deaconess work, along with foreign missionary work, was the pre-eminent women's church work in the United Lutheran Church at the start of our era (1918). That is, deaconess work had had a head start; it had been the first door to the work of the church thrown open to women. But as professional standards of various kinds became established and as professional personnel came to be both in demand and available, the less specialized deaconess was not as much in demand as some other women were until she too developed status as a professional. To be a deaconess without professional preparation was not to be more to the churches' and church agencies' liking than to be a professional without deaconess standing.

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[1] Proceedings, 26th Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Homes, 1944, p. 13.

[2] ULCA, 1944, p. 402b. [3] ULCA, 1958, pp. 722-23.

[4] Minutes, the 33rd Lutheran Deaconess Conference, 1957, p.8.

The same situation may be seen from another angle in this way: as professional standards came to be established in various fields and as professional personnel came to be demanded by church agencies, it was not the deaconess motherhouses that were most prompt to meet this demand. Lutheran professional women could be found,but not chiefly in the deaconess ranks. The deaconesses did not keep up numerically with the growing corps of educated Lutheran women church workers.

Two possible explanations may be offered for consideration: the deaconess motherhouses perhaps could not financially afford to provide adequate professional education for sufficient numbers of their recruits to meet the growing demand. Perhaps on the other hand the total numbers of recruits in the motherhouses were so small that unlimited willingness to provide professional education to as many of them as wanted it could still not begin to keep up with the demand. These two factors, smallness of motherhouse resources and insufficiency of numbers of recruits, could have alternated and amplified each other.

III. QUANTITATIVE ITEMS

A few observations may suggest the broad outline of quantitative changes in the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in the years since 1918. It was indicated above that the Philadelphia motherhouse counted sixty-two consecrated deaconesses and twenty-four probationers for a total of eighty-six sisters in 1918. The figures below indicate the changes of these quantities at the end of the ten year periods since 1918.[1]

Philadelphia Motherhouse

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1918	62	--	24	86
1928	74	4	28	106
1938	85	12	24	121
1948	80	18	24	122
1959	77	18	12	107

Thus there was a net gain of two deaconesses per year in the first decade and of 1.5 per year in the second decade, and there has been virtual stability since. It can be seen that there have been relatively large numbers of elderly (retired) deaconesses and therefore of deaths in recent decades, and it has taken a fair rate of growth to keep the total figure constant. Thus a student (probationer) group of a size to provide growth in the first two decades has only sufficed to keep the population stable in the later decades.

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[1] The figures are found in the Proceedings of the Lutheran Deaconess Conferences for the respective years.

The Baltimore motherhouse counted thirty-seven consecrated deaconesses and fourteen probationers for a total of fifty-one sisters in 1918. The figures below[1] show the changes in these quantities at the ten year intervals.

Baltimore Motherhouse

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1918	37	--	14	51
1928	44	2	21	67
1938	49	10	15	74
1948	56	7	3	66
1959	60	4	17	81

An analysis of the two deaconess populations which was reported to the United Lutheran Churc[illegible]n 1938[2] showed fifty-three consecrations and nineteen deaths of deaconesses in the Philadelphia motherhouse in the two decades since 1918. The net gain of thirty-five deaconesses claimed in the same period would indicate that not one consecrated deaconess had been lost through withdrawal or dismissal in this time unless in each such case the loss was made up by recruiting an already consecrated deaconess from another motherhouse or by re-admitting a consecrated deaconess who had had to withdraw in an earlier year. In fact, the figures require the addition of at least one such consecrated deaconess even if there were no losses other than by death. The figures do indicate withdrawals of some probationer deaconesses. In the case of the Baltimore motherhouse in the same period, consecrations numbered fifty-five and deaths seven, while the net gain was twenty-two consecrated deaconesses, indicating the loss of twenty-six consecrated deaconesses through resignations (and possibly dismissals) during the two decades.

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[1] See Footnote 1, p. 164. [2] ULCA, 1938, pp. 347-48.

The numbers of losses to the deaconess ranks from all causes are neither given in the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference nor included in the various annual reports. They are also not deducible from the figures that are given. Deaths and withdrawals are reported in the statistical reports for a few years (1940-1944) and in some of the annual reports, but not with such consistency that clear notions can be gained of the numbers of losses due to resignations and other causes except occasionally.

	Philadelphia		Baltimore	
	death	withdrawal	death	withdrawal
1940	3	3	0	2
1942	4	5	3	3
1944	4	10	4	1

These are not figures that suggest any helpful generalizations beyond one: that since the total number of deaconesses in both motherhouses remained fairly stable in the decade in which these figures were reported, these losses must have been balanced by approximately equal numbers of admissions.

A few paragraphs in occasional reports go into reasons other than death for losses. Thus the Philadelphia motherhouse reported in 1926 that its losses in the previous biennium totaled seven, of whom two died, one suffered a breakdown in health, one left to help support her parents, two to study, and one to marry. Twelve students had come into the program in the same period.[1] In a five year summary offered only once, in 1950, the Board of Deaconess Work reported for both motherhouses that from 1945 to 1950 twelve consecrated deaconesses had died and ten had withdrawn, eight of them to marry, for a loss of twenty-two consecrated deaconesses. In the same period twenty-one others had been consecrated, keeping the number of consecrated deaconesses about the same; also thirty deaconess students had entered the deaconess program and remained, to be the source of supply for subsequent consecrations.[2]

In 1954 the board reported fifty-five consecrations in the previous decade together with nine withdrawals, seven of them to marry (in six instances the women marrying pastors), one withdrawal for health reasons, and one for "personal reasons."[1] In the same decade the net gain of consecrated deaconesses in both motherhouses was nine.[2] The small net gain in this instance was necessarily due to a large number of deaths. In 1950-52 there were eleven consecrations and eight deaconess deaths in the two motherhouses.[3] In 1952-54 five deaconesses were consecrated and five deaconesses died.[4]

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[1] ULCA, 1926, p. 511. [2] ULCA, 1950, p. 691a.

A comparison of the decade 1944-1954, bringing fifty-five consecrations in both motherhouses, with the two decades 1918-1938, producing 108 consecrations in both motherhouses, shows a remarkable stability of the numbers of consecrations throughout the period under study. Thus the rise in the numbers of deaths among elderly deaconesses has produced a leveling of the deaconess population in the recent decades.

Calls for deaconess service. The numbers of calls for deaconess service were never reported systematically, not even in the minutes of the Board of Deaconess Work, and thus only an anecdotal account can be given.

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[1] ULCA, 1954, p. 763.

[2] From 152 to 161. The figures are in the Proceedings for 1944 (p. 13) and 1955 (p. 11).

[3] ULCA, 1952, pp. 886, 888. [4] ULCA, 1954, pp. 763, 764.

In 1924 the Philadelphia motherhouse reported to the United Lutheran Church that "almost sixty deaconesses more are needed now, about half for new fields of labor . . ."[1] The other half would have been needed as replacements or for the expansion of existing work. In 1928 the total number of deaconesses in both motherhouses(149 actively at work) was described by the Board of Deaconess Work as "altogether insufficient to meet the many demands made upon your motherhouses."[2] In 1930 the Philadelphia motherhouse again reported that it could have placed fifty-eight additional deaconesses in new work in the previous five years and would need another twenty-five in the near future in current fields of work.[3] A study commission asked by the Board of Deaconess Work to survey its whole responsibility and operation reported in 1944 that the primary weakness in the whole enterprise was the scarcity of candidates, in view of the many calls for deaconess service.[4] In 1956 the Board of Deaconess Work reported that it had 104 requests for deaconesses in the biennium, of which it had been able to grant twenty-five.[5] In 1958 the board had ninety-six formal requests on file that it was unable to answer.[6]

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[1] ULCA, 1924, p. 418. [2] ULCA, 1928, p. 478.

[3] ULCA, 1930, p. 551. [4] ULCA, 1944, pp. 404-05.

[5] ULCA, 1956, p. 886. [6] ULCA, 1958, p. 797.

Nothing is said in the reports about the nature of the positions for which deaconesses were requested, but it is no doubt safe to assume that applications kept on file by the board specified openings such as deaconesses were able and willing to accept and had accepted and such as will be considered in the following section. Of the 143 deaconesses in active service in 1954, forty-three were serving in parishes and one hundred in health and welfare institutions and agencies of the United Lutheran Church.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1954, p. 761a.

CHAPTER X

CHANGES IN THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH SINCE 1918 (IV)

The description of the changes in the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918 continues with a review of the work done by the deaconesses.

I. THE WORK DONE BY DEACONESSES

It was indicated in an earlier section that the broad categories of work done by the deaconesses of the United Lutheran Church in 1918 were parish work and institutional work. The former was under the direction of a pastor of a local congregation and included visiting the sick and poor, organizing and instructing the children and youth of the congregation, and caring for the altar and its appurtenances. Institutional work embraced work in hospitals, schools, homes for orphans and for aged persons, and other social agencies. Within these various agencies there were numerous classes of jobs, some of them professional, that deaconesses at various times held. In calling some of the positions professional, one is saying that the corresponding positions are regarded as professional today, although the educational preparation that was demanded of those who held them in 1918 was generally (not only among the deaconesses) quite short of what passes for professional education today. Teachers in elementary and even in high schools frequently had had only normal school education, and schools of nursing, which universally opened their doors to high school graduates, generally found their instructors among the graduates of similar schools who had had some experience, and perhaps some courses in a post-graduate hospital, although university schools of nursing were appearing.

The period under survey saw chiefly three kinds of change in the work done by deaconesses of the United Lutheran Church: (1) Deaconess continued to perform their duties under the same position titles, but met higher standards of preparation for their work, in keeping with the trend of the times. (2) Deaconesses branched out into the performance of new types of work. (3) Deaconesses gave up doing some of the kinds of work they had done in 1918.

II. DEACONESSES MEETING NEW STANDARDS FOR OLD POSITIONS

Institutional Work. In 1918 there were fourteen deaconesses of the Philadelphia motherhouse working in the Lankenau School, a girls' school that comprised all twelve grades.[1] It is not evident in the sources just what preparation these sisters had, other than their deaconess education. Not all were necessarily teachers. Two deaconesses teaching at the Lankenau School were taking summer courses at Pennsylvania State College in 1922.[1] In 1925 four Philadelphia deaconesses were working toward college degrees, two while teaching at the Lankenau School.[2] However, in 1927 it appears that visitors representing the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools urged that the high school pupils at Lankenau ought to be taught by college graduates,[3] implying that at least some of the high school students were still not so taught. The tendency at work in these items is clear. There was an ongoing general movement to elevate the requirements for teaching, especially on the high school level, and deaconesses who were teaching, particularly in the high school, were caught up in it. They had to move toward meeting the developing professional standards or drop out of their positions. No doubt the deaconesses concerned were delighted to move ahead with the times. But even if they had not felt that way, the motherhouse felt obligated to keep abreast of advancing standards. It was a choice between doing that and surrendering the positions of leadership the diaconate then controlled; the latter was unthinkable.[4]

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[1] Proceedings, 1918, p. 6.

It was practically the same case with deaconesses who were teaching student nurses at Lankenau Hospital, the chief field of labor of the Philadelphia deaconesses. Schools of nursing were being expected to staff themselves with instructors who had advanced standing,[1] that is, who were graduates of colleges as well as of schools of nursing. At this point, too, the Board of Deaconess Work and the motherhouse simply could not see the diaconate losing positions of leadership that it had proudly filled, or even originated, in the past. There was no choice in their minds but to keep up with the new requirements.

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[1] ULCA, 1922, p. 392. [2] BDW, 10/27/25.

[3] BDW, 10/25/27. [4] *Ibid*.

Another situation of the same type enveloped deaconesses who were doing social work. Here too onrushing professional standards overtook deaconesses already established in work that was being professionalized. Medical social work in the Lankenau Hospital was already in 1918 a case in point.[2] Other examples of deaconesses established in social work in 1918, before social work had arrived as a profession, are the deaconesses who were matrons and assistants in homes for orphans and aged persons, visitors for inner mission societies, and director of a hospice for young working women. Some took special courses as they could without leaving their positions, as some of those in teaching had done; in other instances the incumbent was eventually succeeded by a deaconess with more adequate social work education, particularly as the Philadelphia deaconess school came to specialize in theoretical and clinical education for institutional work.[1]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] There is a study of the meeting of this problem in the Proceedings of 1918, pp. 50-51.

Parish work. The same motif, deaconesses performing under the same job title, but meeting higher standards of preparation, can also be seen in the area of parish work, although with differences. The types of work considered immediately above, teaching and social work, were becoming professionalized under secular auspices, and the deaconesses were simply keeping up with the procession. One may see it as the churches keeping up with the procession, the deaconesses' response being one aspect of the churches' response. Parish work, however, is a type of occupation that only occurs in church circles. It is clear that the advancement of standards in parish work was not without benefit from the example and pressure of the heightening of standards in such related secular fields as public education. Nevertheless, parish work was a field that the churches had all to themselves and in which they alone could act. The fact is that they did act and as the Cummings report pointed out in 1946, such large and influential Protestant bodies as the Methodist, Presbyterian (U.S.A.), and Episcopal churches had all endeavored to get parish work up on a professional level, and had established standards including four years of college and one or two years of graduate study.[1]

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[1] BDW, 4/20/44.

One aspect of this development was the widespread enthusiasm for religious education that swept through the Protestant churches in the decades after the first world war. Drawing on the literature of psychology and education as it related to religious education, and cultivating research of its own, the movements developed numerous resources for the teaching of religious education. Parish work had always been educational work with children and young people as much as anything. Now the religious education movement helped to give to parish work a body of learning with which to lengthen and enrich its preparatory curriculum. This fact is reflected in the adding of the third year to the deaconess curriculum at the Baltimore school in 1935, as well as in the advancing of the level of instruction at Baltimore through raising the admission requirements in 1931 to include graduation from high school,[2] and in 1938 to include two years of college.[3]

III. DEACONESSES IN NEW KINDS OF WORK

In addition to keeping up in educational qualifications with the advancing standards of positions they already held, the deaconesses have also prepared themselves since 1918 for kinds of work that deaconesses had not previously done.

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[1] Personnel Standards and Practices for Women Church Workers, p. 14.

[2] BDW, 6/25/31. [3] ULCA, 1938, p. 351.

Some of these types of work were refinements and specializations within areas of work already discussed. Thus, in the field of social work, a deaconess was reported in 1920 to be "conducting" a settlement house;[1] two deaconesses in 1926 were attendants in a home for crippled children,[2] and another, executive secretary of a city inner mission society, responsible for its family welfare work.[3]

In the field of hospital work, two deaconesses were reported in 1928 to be licensed pharmacists,[4] another in 1934 to be superintendent of nurses in Lankenau Hospital,[5] and the same deaconess, later in 1934, to be superintendent of Lankenau Hospital.[6] In 1942 a deaconess was an occupational therapist.[7] In 1944 deaconesses were reported as dietitians, X-ray technicians, and physiotherapists.[8]

In the field of education a deaconess was reported in 1944 to be a counselor of college students;[9] in 1946 four deaconesses were said to be preparing through working for higher degrees to teach in the two motherhouses;[1] and in 1948 another was principal of a parochial school.[2]

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[1] ULCA, 1920, p. 415. [2] ULCA, 1926, p. 510. [3] Ibid., p. 512.

[4] ULCA, 1928, p. 484. [5] BDW, 2/22/34. [6] BDW, 6/28/34.

[7] ULCA, 1942, p. 456. [8] ULCA, 1944, p. 410a. [9] Ibid.

Somewhat in the vein of parish work, two deaconesses were working in 1926 as missionaries to immigrant families in two American cities,[3] and in 1930 two deaconesses were appointed visitors to women in prison, conducting services of worship for them and visiting them individually.[4] Another was asked by a synod in 1937 to be a kind of district parish worker, being responsible for the organization of religious educational work in a number of parishes on an itinerant basis.[5]

There are very many respects in which the work of a deaconess overseas as a foreign missionary is simply another variation on the theme of parish work. However, it was not always seen so. When the question of assigning deaconesses to foreign mission work was raised in 1921, the Board of Deaconess Work delivered itself of the dictum that the purpose of the board was "to train young women for service in the Church 'as deaconesses.'"[6]

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[1] ULCA, 1946, p. 539b. [2] ULCA, 1948, p. 631.

[3] ULCA, 1926, p. 510. [4] ULCA, 1930, p. 548.

[5] BDW, 6/25/36; 6/24/37. [6] BDW, 6/22/21.

> The proper sphere of deaconess service is three-fold: (a) service in a congregation or 'parish work,' (b) service in the institutions of the Church or 'institutional work,' and (c) nursing in private homes so far as this may be possible.[1]

One might have thought that any of these things, for all the statement said, could as well be done overseas, but at the time this seemed so obviously excluded that the exclusion did not have to be expressed. As late as 1936, when a deaconess wanted permission to apply for a missionary position in Japan, the Baltimore motherhouse informed her that she could use her gifts just as helpfully in deaconess work[!] However, a few years later, after the president of the United Lutheran Church had written a letter to the Board of Deaconess Work, asking that deaconesses might be assigned to missionary service overseas, the Baltimore motherhouse informed the board that it approved beginning deaconess work in Japan.[2] In 1942 the president of the Board of Deaconess Work proposed not only that deaconesses should be permitted to be foreign missionaries, but that the directing sisters should sit with the personnel committee of the Women's Missionary Society in order to learn new ranges of the church's need for women workers.[3]

As an example of the breaking of wholly new ground by deaconesses it is interesting to point to the creation of the new staff position of Promotional Secretary by the Board of Deaconess

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[1] Ibid. [2] BDW, 6/22/39. [3] BDW, 10/27/42.

Work in 1943 and the board's election of a deaconess to it.[1] Here was a position that was not an extension or derivative of anything else deaconesses were doing vocationally; it was the work of publicizing the diaconate in the church and recruiting candidates. The case is similar in the election by the board of its first woman (deaconess) executive secretary in 1944;[2] the previous executive and general secretaries had been clergymen. All subsequent executive, field, and personnel secretaries have been deaconesses. In 1946 the Board of Deaconess Work reported that "the administrator of the Baltimore motherhouse is a deaconess . . . the first deaconess to become an administrator of an American motherhouse."[3] In 1942 a deaconess was reported to be working as an "expert ecclesiastical embroiderer" on silk and linen altar appurtenances,[4] but although there was a minor deaconess tradition of working on altar paraments, this was largely a fortuitous matter and did not represent new policy.

Deaconess Work Dropped

A few types of work performed by deaconesses in 1918 gradually dropped out of the picture. The operation of kindergartens and of "industrial schools" was no more heard of after the 1920's. Practical nursing in private homes disappeared too, except so far as it was done by parish deaconesses in the course of their regular work.

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[1] BDW, 7/29/43. [2] BDW, 1/19/44. [3] ULCA, 1946, p. 538b.

[4] ULCA, 1942, p. 456.

When the AIDS program got under way in 1957, it brought thirty additional women into the deaconess working force for a year. Using the training they had received before volunteering, they were placed in parish work as teachers, secretaries, visitors, and youth workers, in institutions as housemothers and administrative assistants, and in social missions agencies as case aides and office workers.[1] They did not open up any fields of work that deaconesses had not already entered.

In 1946 it was resolved by the Philadelphia motherhouse that deaconesses would reach the age of mandatory retirement at sixty-five, but the way was left open for up to ten further one year appointments, if both the deaconess and the employing agency were willing.[2]

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[1] ULCA, 1958, p. 793a. [2] BDW, 1/17/46.

CHAPTER XI

CHANGES IN THE DEACONESS WORK OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH SINCE 1918 (V)

The account of the changes in the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church in America since 1918 is concluded with a discussion of changes involving the education of the deaconesses.

I. ADVANCING DEACONESS EDUCATION

The major educational changes in the earlier half of the period since 1918 had to do with lengthening the duration of deaconess education. The underlying motivation was the desire to keep deaconess education in step with the forward movement of education in the areas in which deaconesses were at work, especially nursing, teaching, social work, and parish work.

The Baltimore school had already installed a system of field work, supervised by the training sister, faculty, and local pastors, under which the deaconesses received clinical training in visiting the sick, in interviewing applicants for assistance and aged persons in their own homes and in institutions, and in conducting religious services for them.[1] Similarly, the Baltimore sisters received medical lectures (Materia medica, Practice of Medicine, Anatomy and Physiology) from physicians at the motherhouse and their clinical training in (practical) nursing in a three months summer course at the Lankenau Hospital in Philadelphia.[1] This field work program was progressively enlarged through the years. In 1924 the field work cited included, in addition, calling on church school pupils and their parents, group work in children's institutional homes, work with a prisoners' aid society, observation and teaching in kindergarten and Sunday School, and giving devotional talks and conducting prayer circles.[2] In 1926 the field work was extended to include placements outside the city of Baltimore,[3] in 1928 to include visits to centers of the work of other denominations.[4] The Baltimore student deaconesses also spent the summer between the two school years in field work of some other kind, if not in practical nursing.[5]

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[1] BDW, 1/24/22.

In 1926 the Baltimore school instituted a "triennial homecoming retreat," which was established both as a spiritual retreat and as opportunity to provide the deaconesses with refresher courses.[6] The curriculum the first year comprised courses in John, Ezekiel, and Religions of the World and conferences on

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[1] BDW, 11/14/22; 4/22/25; 6/22/26. [2] BDW, 11/11/24.

[3] BDW, 4/27/26. [4] BDW, 1/24/28. [5] BDW, 6/26/30.

[6] BDW, 4/22/25; 4/27/26.

"personal work" (evangelistic work with individuals), weekday religious education, and "other practical subjects."[1] The curriculum in 1929 included Life of Christ, Educational Psychology, Job, Youth Organizations, and daily round tables on missionary organizations, the deaconess and her calling, deaconess training, Sunday and weekday church school problems, personal work, and paraments.[2] In a somewhat similar vein the Philadelphia motherhouse reported its first conference in 1930 of deaconesses in charge of welfare institutions. The conference in this case lasted one full day.[3]

The Philadelphia motherhouse reported in 1926 that it was preparing to add a second year to the basic deaconess course in religion and diaconics.[4] The deaconess students were to spend eighteen hours per week in classroom work in the mornings throughout the two school years and continue to do practical work in the motherhouse and hospital in the afternoons.[5] The addition of the second year enabled the motherhouse to add courses in Institutional Management (including food chemistry, food values, menus, purchasing, laundry, kitchen, and help), Psychology, Religious Forces in America, Religious Education, and Public Speaking.[6] Civics was added in 1930.[7]

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[1] BDW, 4/27/26. [2] BDW, 4/23/29. [3] BDW, 4/24/30.
[4] BDW, 4/27/26. [5] BDW, 11/9/26. [6] BDW, 4/23/29.
[7] BDW, 1/22/31.

As early as June 1924 a deaconess was graduated from the College of Pharmacy of Temple University.[1] In the succeeding years there was a steady if modest flow of deaconesses into various colleges and professional schools. It has to be noted that the motivation the Board of Deaconess Work confessed to itself in sending deaconesses on in pursuit of college degrees was the necessity of doing so in order not to have to surrender the positions of leadership held by deaconesses in situations in which professional standards were being raised.[2] Examples of such positions were those of deaconesses teaching high school students at the Lankenau School for girls and teaching student nurses at the Lankenau Hospital School of Nursing.

Why did the Board of Deaconesses Work, an education enterprise, have to be pushed into providing more education? Finances played a part in this situation. The resources of the board were not sufficient to send to college or professional school all the deaconess students who desired to go. A deaconess applied for "severance" in 1925 in order to "seek further preparation for religious educational work" and it was granted.[3] Other Baltimore deaconesses had already been sent to colleges and professional schools at the board's expense. The young woman in 1925 may have been considered less promising than desired as a candidate for further education, but it is just as possible that the board had decided it could not afford to take on one more set of college fees. In 1926 a deaconess asked permission to take courses elsewhere and offered to bear half the cost; the board agreed.[1] In 1938 another asked permission to take courses entirely at her own expense. The board asked the Baltimore motherhouse direction to reconsider the request with a view to providing the money itself.[2] From the board's standpoint each such case was a double expense, for the board had to bear the temporary loss of the services of each deaconess that it sent to college as well as her college costs. It was something to weigh carefully when the whole operation was already in a weak financial position and not readily able to increase its income. At the United Lutheran Church convention in 1946 the Board of Deaconess Work undertook to report on a thirteen point program it had adopted; the fourth point had been sabbatical leaves in which consecrated deaconesses might take refresher courses. The board reported that some deaconesses had been released to take courses "to qualify them to accept or retain certain professional positions," but that lack of funds and short-handedness had limited this opportunity to a minority of the deaconesses.[3] There is visible here a major reason why the Board of Deaconess Work and the Philadelphia motherhouse present a picture of themselves as forced to provide higher education to the deaconesses rather than as eager to do so. The institutions were more ready to spend money this way than the church was willing to give them the money to spend.

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[1] BDW, 6/24/24. [2] BDW, 10/25/27. [3] BDW, 10/27/25.

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[1] BDW, 4/27/26. [2] BDW, 10/27/38. [3] ULCA, 1946, p. 539.

The first sign of the advent of a three year course at Baltimore was a report in 1929 by the superintendent of instruction to the Board of Deaconess Work that there was student interest in a third year of study; but no proposal was made.[1] Later in the year the board's committee on education and training recommended that there be a third year of deaconess instruction and that it be devoted to the history of successful motherhouses and to intensive Bible study as related to works of mercy and to the principles and purposes of the diaconate. It was intended that the additional year be added to the deaconess's probation. The board took no action.[2] In 1934 the proposal was made again that the Baltimore motherhouse add a third year to its course, this time by the president of the board.[3] (In the meantime, in 1931, the academic admission requirement at Baltimore had been raised to high school graduation or the equivalent.[4]) On this occasion the proposal was adopted, with the proviso that only two years, instead of three, of practical experience after completion of the educational work would be required before probationers would be eligible for consecration.[1] The third year was devoted chiefly to "practical experience and office training."[2] The practical experience was field work as case aides in welfare agencies, and in visiting weekday and Sunday church school children, and conducting teachers' training classes and youth and women's group meetings. At the same time courses were added to the Baltimore curriculum in the area of sacred music (Liturgics and Hymnology) and in social service (lectures by a social worker and weekly field trips to welfare agencies).[3] The basic course in the Philadelphia motherhouse, apart from education for nursing or any other professional service, was of two years duration.[4]

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[1] BDW, 1/22/29. [2] BDW, 4/23/29. [3] BDW, 10/30/34.

[4] BDW, 6/25/31.

A grand conception of the female diaconate as embracing every imaginable kind of work women might do under the auspices of the church and requiring schools of music, social work, and missions, in addition to existing schools, was presented to the Board of Deaconess Work by a new member in 1936. The board approved the outline as "Possible Plans and Goals" and presented it to the church in its biennial report.[5] The outline was an exercise in thinking big, designed to kindle the imagination and prepare the church for investing more thought, money, and persons in the diaconate. But the efforts of the board and of the church to live up to it came hesitantly and little at a time.

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[1] BDW, 6/27/35. [2] ULCA, 1936, p. 317. [3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 319. [5] Ibid., pp. 311-13.

In 1938 with an eye on the progress it had forecast and desiring "to supply a training which would fit the deaconess more adequately for the difficult service she is called upon to render the Church,"[1] the board decided to raise the entrance requirements at Baltimore to include the completion of two years of college. The board reserved the right to make exceptions to the rule, but it hoped hereby to raise the level of the instruction and the level of competence of those who sat under it.[2] It reaffirmed the determination to provide a three year course of deaconess study.

By the opening of the fall semester in 1938 the board had succeeded in upgrading its instruction by adding a doctor of philosophy to its staff. The lady was engaged to teach Christian Education and Life of Christ at the Philadelphia motherhouse and Christian Education and Psychology at Baltimore.[3] The board also assured the church in its biennial report that:

> Provision is made, wherever possible, to give advance training in colleges, universities or special schools to more adequately prepare deaconesses now in service for their particular kind of work.[4]

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[1] ULCA, 1938, p. 351. [2] BDW, 2/24/38; 6/16/38.

[3] BDW, 10/27/38. [4] ULCA, 1938, p. 351.

The board also told the church:

> We are looking forward to the time when the preparation of the deaconess will be sufficiently thorough to meet modern standards in similar activities.[1]

The Philadelphia motherhouse, however, exercised its independence of the Board of Deaconess Work to affirm that while it had some and needed more deaconesses with college and professional degrees, it would continue to admit qualified high school graduates.[2]

In 1940, acting on the recommendation of its committee on education and in further pursuit of superior instruction, the board voted to reorganize its instructional staff at Baltimore. It also went on record as looking forward to making graduation from college a requirement for admission of both deaconess and non-deaconess parish worker students.[3] The board restated for the United Lutheran Church its reasons for wanting to elevate its educational standards:

> (1) The work of the Church demands better trained workers. (2) Women workers in similar fields of activity have had full college training in addition to professional training. (3) Young women in some other churches are required to do work leading to a college degree before they enter the diaconate.[4]

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., p. 358. [3] BDW, 6/27/40.

[4] ULCA, 1940, p. 302.

It was noted at the same time that at the Philadelphia motherhouse it was preferred that the deaconess student take the full course of the Lankenau Hospital nurses' training school in addition to the two year basic course, because as a registered nurse she would have the qualifications and public recognition for a variety of services. However, the student might be asked to enter institutional work directly after basic training; or in exceptional cases she might be enrolled for special professional education, other than or in addition to nursing.[1]

II. DEACONESS GRADUATE SCHOOLS?

The Education Committee of the Board of Deaconess Work was not satisfied with the advances already made and proposed in 1941 that a joint commission be created by the Board of Deaconess Work with the Board of Trustees of the Philadelphia motherhouse to study the whole question of the position of trained women, including deaconesses, in the work of the church. The board concurred.[2] By the spring of 1942 the commission was ready with a set of thirteen resolutions, which were reported to the United Lutheran Church in 1944 and (with one exception) were not challenged by the church. The items with educational significance are noted here. The most radical proposal of the group (and the one that the church disavowed) was, as had been forecast earlier in the wish to admit college graduates only to the deaconess schools:[1] "(6) That training in both motherhouse schools be on a graduate level." The other proposals were:

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 301-02. [2] BDW, 4/24/41.

> (4) That a sabbatical year be granted consecrated deaconesses for refresher courses. (5) That consideration be given to the selection and preparation of women for the following positions in the faculties of the motherhouses: Bible, missions, religious education, social work, and diaconics. . . . (7) That arrangements be made for the interchange of faculty members with other graduate and professional schools, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, and that arrangements likewise be made for interchange of students.

The board reported to the church that all these items were "put into effect or adopted as goals during this biennium of 1942-44."[2]

One measure of the seriousness of the board is to be seen in the way the faculties of the two deaconess schools were strengthened. Of the nine teachers in the Baltimore school in 1942 (all but two of whom were teaching part-time) three were doctors of philosophy, two were clergymen, who had had three years of seminary education after college, one was a certified public accountant, one a registered nurse, one a bachelor of philosophy, and one a veteran graduate deaconess. Of the ten instructors in the Philadelphia school (all but three of whom were teaching part-time) two were doctors of philosophy, two were clergymen, one was a master of arts, one a registered nurse, and a bachelor of science, and two were graduate deaconesses.[1] In 1944 the Board of Deaconess Work reported that the combined faculties numbered thirty persons, of whom four were doctors of philosophy, six were masters of arts, and eight were bachelors.[2]

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[1] BDW, 6/27/40. [2] ULCA, 1944, p. 401-02.

At the 1942 convention of the United Lutheran Church a resolution from the floor was adopted to the effect that:

> the Board of Deaconess Work be requested to enter into conference with the Board of Education in order to survey and appraise the work being done by serving deaconesses, personnel, faculties, curricula of institutions, and the total responsibility of the Diaconate to the work of the Church at large: and that a detailed report be made by the Board of Deaconess Work to this body at its next convention.[3]

There is the hint here of a certain amount of impatience with the Board of Deaconess Work on the part of the convention.

The already operative joint survey commission, representing the two motherhouses, was given the task of working with the Board of Education in compliance with this resolution of the church. The findings of this latest appraisal of deaconess work and education were not essentially different from those developed earlier. The progressive elevation of educational standards was particularly encouraged. In a portion of the survey devoted to explaining the small numbers of applications for admission to the diaconate, the commission mentioned among other causes the lower educational standards previously set for workers in the employment of the church.[1] It noted the more important fields of church work that were calling for trained workers and found a considerable number that were, where they functioned under non-church auspices, tending to elevate their professional standards: nursing, teaching in schools of nursing, medical missions overseas, institutional work with children, religious education, teaching, social work. It reiterated that the deaconess "should be on an equal basis with secular workers in her field."[2] It found almost all pastors convinced that parish workers should be college graduates.

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[1] ULCA, 1942, p. 459. [2] ULCA, 1944, p. 410b.

[3] ULCA, 1942, p. 473.

The Board of Deaconess Work adopted on the commission's recommendation the following additional educational policies: that there should be job analyses of the positions held by deaconesses and standard but flexible courses of training geared to these positions; also that deaconess education should be designed to keep the minds of the deaconesses flexible, free of fixed patterns, narrow viewpoints, and traditional loyalties that obscure the larger aspects of the work of the whole church; that an adventurous spirit and enthusiasm must be recaptured in the diaconate; and that potential deaconess leaders must be identified and developed.[1]

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[1] BDW, 4/20/44. [2] Ibid.

There were further resolutions adopted that were intended to modernize and improve the two deaconess schools: namely, that there be regular conferences of the directing sisters, that the Philadelphia school specialize in preparing institutional workers and that the Baltimore school specialize in preparing parish workers and other workers in religious education, and that the schools provide quarters for students separate from those for older sisters.[2]

III. THE COLLEGIATE PLAN

At the United Lutheran Church convention in 1946 the Board of Deaconess Work undertook to report on the progress it had made in respect to the thirteen point original program prepared by its joint survey commission, which it had reported to the church in 1944.

With regard to the item, "That the training in both schools be on a graduate level,"[3] it was pointed out that the church had vetoed this principle by mandating the continued admission of applicants with no more than high school preparation.[4] However, the board could report that it was getting its schools accredited on the undergraduate level. Cooperative programs with Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and with Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, colleges related to the United Lutheran Church, would enable the deaconess student to earn a bachelor's degree in a five year curriculum combining liberal arts studies at the colleges and professional studies at the motherhouses.

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[1] *Ibid*. [2] *Ibid*. [3] ULCA, 1944, p. 401. [4] *Ibid*., p. 420.

The Muhlenberg College plan recognized the Philadelphia motherhouse as an extension center of the college.[1] The student was permitted to take her first year at Temple University or the University of Pennsylvania. She enrolled at Muhlenberg College for three summer sessions and completed the requirement for the bachelor's degree with two or three years of work at the Philadelphia deaconess school.[2] The arrangement was also open to non-deaconess students.[3]

The Susquehanna plan had the deaconess student, or non-deaconess parish worker student, spend her first two years at Susquehanna or another accredited college, the next two years at the Baltimore school where the major in Christian education including supervised field work was completed, and the fifth year at Susquehanna which granted the degree.[4] Susquehanna awarded thirty-four blanket hours of credit for the two years at the Baltimore school.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1946, p. 543b. [2] Ibid., p. 554b.

[3] Ibid., p. 543b. [4] ULCA, 1946, p. 544a.

The Susquehanna type of affiliation was established by the Baltimore school in 1946 with Wagner College, Staten Island, New York.[2] In 1947 Thiel College in Greenville, Pennsylvania, and Midland College in Fremont, Nebraska, also affiliated with the Baltimore school and Susquehanna, Wagner, and Midland took up a parallel affiliation with the Philadelphia school,[3] and later Thiel and Waterloo College, Waterloo, Canada, were affiliated with both schools.[4]

The Board of Deaconess Work nevertheless took the opportunity to reassert before the church in 1946 that its ultimate goal was deaconess schools on the graduate level.[5]

Point five of the thirteen point program of the board had been concerned with adequately prepared deaconess instructors for the deaconess schools, especially in five areas: Bible, missions, religious education, social work, and diaconics. The board could report progress here also, citing two deaconesses with masters' degrees in religious education, two enrolled in schools of social work, and one candidate for a doctorate of philosophy.[1]

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[1] BDW, 4/25/46. [2] BDW, 10/17/46. [3] BDW, 1/23/47.

[4] ULCA, 1948, p. 626b. [5] ULCA, 1946, p. 539.

Point seven had promised to arrange exchanges of students and instructors between the deaconess schools and other graduate and professional schools, Lutheran and non-Lutheran. Here it could be showed that one deaconess was a member of a college faculty and that theological seminary professors were serving as part-time lecturers in the deaconess schools.[2]

IV. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

It was also in 1946 that the Board of Deaconess Work reported the results of a major survey of personnel standards and practices as they affected all women church workers in the United Lutheran Church. The survey had been requested originally by the Council of Women. The first Council of Women in Full-Time Service in the Church, sponsored by the Board of Deaconess Work and held in 1943, had requested a survey of the positions for women workers in the United Lutheran Church and the educational qualifications involved, on the basis of which it wanted the board to expand its educational facilities.[3] The survey was made and the results reported to the United Lutheran Church in 1944.[4] The second Council of Women was held in February 1944. It expressed its appreciation of the concern of the Board of Deaconess Work and of its expanded program in the interests of all full-time women church workers and made some further requests, for which the Board of Deaconess Work secured the support of the church. The first of these requests was that the Board of Deaconess Work, the Board of Education, and the Women's Missionary Society of the United Lutheran Church be authorized "to study, and if found feasible, to set up proper personnel standards and practices for all women workers" in the service of the church.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1946, p. 539b. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 539.

[3] BDW, 4/29/43. [4] ULCA, 1944, pp. 402-03.

When the representatives of the two boards and the missionary society met and organized themselves for the tasks assigned, the sub-committee on personnel standards and practices engaged a "professional personnel and social work surveyor and analyst," Miss Frances Cummings, to scrutinize the duties, preparations, and salaries of the full-time women workers in parishes, institutions, and social agencies within the church.[2] Utilizing the findings of the previous survey of women workers reported to the United Lutheran Church in 1944 and new data, Miss Cummings had no difficulty in arriving at recommendations of new standards for educational preparation.

With regard to parish workers, Miss Cummings found that the

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 404. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 549.

Methodist, Presbyterian (U.S.A.), and Episcopal churches had all adopted requirements of college degrees and graduate study for their candidates for parish educational work. She recommended that Lutheran

> . . . congregations be urged to recognize the professional character of the work performed by those who direct parish education.
>
> 2. The ideal standard toward which to work should be a college degree and post graduate study in religious education, at least two years or the equivalent of an M.A. degree including supervised field work.[1]

In connection with institutional workers, the Cummings report found that "the preparation for institutional positions is not standardized. However, training courses are available now in many schools of social work."[2] The case of social workers in agencies was different, however. "Work in social agencies is much more standardized than that in institutions," Miss Cummings wrote.[3] Here again she recommended a standard in the United Lutheran Church fully equivalent to that of secular social agencies.

In summary Miss Cummings distinguished professional and non-professional types of church work. She included directors of religious education, parish workers, and social workers in the former, and institutional workers, such as housemothers, matrons, practical nurses, in the latter. She specified "professional or graduate study with supervised experience, preferably leading to a Master's degree" and "religious orientation" as requisite for the professional workers. She proposed two years of college, "specialized professional training," and "clinical or in-service training" along with "religious orientation" for the non-professional positions.[1]

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[1] Personnel Standards and Practices for Women Church Workers, pp. 18-19.

[2] ULCA, 1946, p. 552. [3] Ibid.

The Board of Deaconess Work announced to the church that it had adopted these standards.[2] However, in proposing them to the church it only asked that they "be referred to the institutions and agencies affected for their consideration with the view to adoption." This the United Lutheran Church did.[3] Since the institutions were legally independent of the United Lutheran Church, being governed by their own boards of trustees, the mild referral must be viewed as legally appropriate.

Deaconesses were among the women workers who supplied data for the study.[4] They were equally intended to be within the range of effect of the recommendations.

V. EQUAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN CHURCH WORKERS?

The second request of the second Council of Women, in which the United Lutheran Church had concurred, was to the effect that the Board of Deaconess Work and the Board of Education study "the question of making possible equal opportunities for religious and professional education within the Church for women as well as for men. . . ."[1] A separate sub-committee of the representatives of the Boards of Education and Deaconess Work was assigned to make this study. In its report to the church the sub-committee called attention to the two year Master of Arts program offered by the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, for women who desired to prepare themselves for parish work.[2] Under the rubric, "Some Unmet Responsibilities," it asked for church graduate schools where professional workers and volunteer workers who were college graduates could study "the faith, the history, and the program of the Church." Without being clear about it, it seemed to ask also for a church school of social work. It further expressed the wish that the synods of the church would provide financial assistance to women church worker students as they did to ministerial students. The sub-committee also voiced the belief that the church should enable the Board of Deaconess Work to strengthen the programs of clinical training in religious education and in social work at the two schools.[3] It was an ineffectual report, in its failure to state clearly what it called for and in its failure to confront the United Lutheran Church with actual recommendations that would have had to be acted on, or at least discussed. Equal educational opportunity for women (the possibility the sub-committee was asked to study) would have meant the possibility of full theological seminary education following four years of college as well as of specialized education for social work and other professions. Such a hopeful view of women's educational opportunity in the church, although it coincided with the board's wish to conduct deaconess education on the graduate level, had a poor chance of approval at the time in a church that was ready to vote that:

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[1] Ibid., p. 553. [2] Ibid., p. 556. [3] Ibid., p. 557.

[4] Ibid., p. 550a.

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[1] ULCA, 1944, p. 412. [2] ULCA, 1946, p. 554b.

[3] Ibid., p. 555.

> . . . the Church keep open the doors of our motherhouses to capable and consecrated young women with a high school education or its equivalent as well as to college graduates and professional women.[1]

The remaining request of the second Council of Women with educational significance in which the United Lutheran Church had concurred was one asking for a study of commissioning ceremonies for accredited women church workers. It had been felt in the Council of Women in 1944 that this was a means of giving welcome recognition to women who were working, frequently at some disadvantage, for the church.[2] In 1950 the question of commissioning women workers became connected with the question of the higher educational standards for women church workers that the Board of Deaconess Work had been promulgating. It appeared that the prospect of commissioning could serve to give effectiveness to the program of raising standards.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1944, p. 420. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 403b-04a, 412b.

The Board of Deaconess Work brought to the convention of the United Lutheran Church in 1950 a series of recommendations making the commissioning of women church workers conditional upon their meeting the personal and educational standards set by the Boards of Deaconess Work and Education. The actual definition of the educational standards and even the question of the "constitutional and doctrinal soundness of the commissioning of women" were referred by the convention for further study, but the principle of linking some kind of formal recognition of women workers to the meeting of standards was accepted by the United Lutheran Church "as information," that is, as within the competence of the Boards of Deaconess Work and of Education.[2]

The definition of the actual educational standards for women workers was assigned in 1952 by the United Lutheran Church to the Board of Education, with the proviso that the consecration of deaconesses and the commissioning of foreign missionaries were excluded from the assignment, which left the latter in the care of their respective boards.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1950, p. 222. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 699, 700, 1057.

The question about the appropriateness of commissioning was decided by the United Lutheran Church in 1952 in such a way as to make it an appropriate form of recognition of lay workers not only when performed by the United Lutheran Church, but when performed by "boards, agencies, synods, institutions, and congregations," all of them "on their own terms."[2] By implication, there was thought to be no really theological or legal question involved at all, as there would have been if ordination had been proposed. Commissioning was being judged to be altogether a matter of granting a formal recognition that was locally, not universally, valid. By the same token the leverage that the Board of Deaconess Work had hoped to get out of commissioning, in order to apply it to elevating the educational requirements for women's church work, did not materialize.

The 1950 convention of the United Lutheran Church adopted a statement, on the motion of the Board of Deaconess Work, in which it declared that as it recognized the church's theological seminaries as professional schools on the graduate level, so it recognized the Philadelphia and Baltimore training schools as professional schools on the undergraduate level for women church workers, the latter school specializing in parish and church secretarial work and the former in health and welfare work.[1] This resolution represented a kind of retreat on the part of the Board of Deaconess Work. At any rate it is difficult to see it as a gain for the reason that it seems merely to make explicit what was already in effect. It was a resignation, in that it expressly retracted the ambition of the board to get the deaconess schools to be graduate schools.

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[1] ULCA, 1952, pp. 512-13, 820. [2] *Ibid*., pp. 227, 830.

The Board of Deaconess Work also reported to the church in 1952 that a conference with the colleges and the staff of the Board of Education of the church had led to an agreement according to which the Board of Education staff would visit the deaconess schools and accredit them to the colleges, so that the latter could allow credit for the studies taken at the deaconess schools without jeopardizing their own accreditations. It was part of the report by the board that not only were all the United Lutheran Church colleges affiliated with the deaconess schools, but most of them had adopted the "three-two plan" (three consecutive years at the college, the two last years at the deaconess school); furthermore, two Lutheran colleges outside the United Lutheran Church and two private universities were accepting the credits of the deaconess schools toward a bachelor's degree.[1]

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[1] ULCA, 1950, p. 700b.

The achievement of this accreditation had necessitated improvement of the motherhouse libraries and faculties. The board had reported in 1950 that:

> Attention has been given to the building up of the libraries to meet the standards of accrediting agencies. A better balance in favor of full-time instructors as over against part-time staff is gradually being achieved.[2]

In 1954 the unification of the educational program in the two deaconess schools (first announced in 1952)[3] had proceeded to the extent that the first year classes of the two schools were merged, meeting in Baltimore, and a unified catalogue was published.[4] The first year deaconess school program (actually the student's fourth year since starting college) focussed on religious subject matter. The second deaconess school year was specialized. The student who wanted to prepare for service in the field of religious education and parish work continued in Baltimore. The student who desired elementary preparation for service in health and welfare agencies took her fifth year at the Philadelphia school.[5]

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[1] ULCA, 1952, p. 887b. [2] ULCA, 1950, p. 690a.

[3] ULCA, 1952, p. 887b. [4] ULCA, 1954, p. 762a.

[5] Deaconess Schools, Catalogue 1956-1958, p. 2 and passim.

In 1956 the Board of Deaconess Work reported that the Baltimore and Philadelphia schools were conducting summer institutes in their respective areas for full-time church workers desiring refresher courses and for volunteer workers wanting advanced study. Fifty-four students had been enrolled in the two summers since 1954.[1]

The major changes of the educational pattern of the deaconess work of the United Lutheran Church from 1918 to the present have been reviewed. In retrospect it is clear that a high-water mark of educational intentions was reached in 1944 and 1946 with the effort to establish the deaconess schools on the graduate level. That failed, and the schools settled for the status of accredited (through affiliation with colleges of the United Lutheran Church) undergraduate professional schools. They had made a real advance from the days in 1918 and following, when they functioned on the high school level. With all recently consecrated deaconesses being college graduates, it was possible for the Board of Deaconess Work to send at least some of them on to the pursuit of graduate degrees in professional schools and universities, and there was nothing to prevent women from coming to the diaconate as already possessors of bachelors' and higher degrees, as they were invited to do and as some did.

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[1] ULCA, 1956, p. 885b.

PART III

OTHER LUTHERAN DEACONESS WORK

CHAPTER XII

OTHER LUTHERAN DIACONATES -- GROUP I

Previous chapters have described the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in America as it was in 1918 and the changes that have occurred in it since then. It is necessary now to begin the examination of the other Lutheran and Protestant diaconates of women and the developments they underwent in the same period.

The histories of some of these diaconates can be recounted with more brevity, for the reason that the concern of the study is the history of the conception of the deaconess and of her work and education since 1918, and from the standpoint of this concern these diaconates have to be thought of as having no history or almost no history at all. That is, they were confronted with the necessity of helping the deaconess idea develop to meet a new era, but they would not or could not do it.

Thus the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Minneapolis reported to the Lutheran Free Church in 1924 that the young women who were applying for admission as students wanted to be nurses, not deaconesses. There was at the same time a demand for workers other than nurses, to do charitable, pastoral, and missionary work in the city and overseas; but it was said to call for women who were both qualified, and willing to serve "without expecting handsome remuneration."[1] That is, there was a call for deaconesses, but the young women did not wish to become deaconesses. Why? It was a situation that invited experimentation. Was it the remuneration? Why should deaconesses have been expected to work for almost nothing when nurses did not? But the important fact from the standpoint of this study is that nothing was done to reshape the notion of a deaconess, to meet the current need.

Substantially the same state of affairs is to be seen in a number of other diaconates -- the idea of the deaconess was permitted no development from 1918 on. For this reason the history since 1918, outside the United Lutheran Church in America, of the conception of the deaconess and of her proper work and education can be simplified by briefly sketching these diaconates "without histories" at this point, and thus eliminating the need to refer to them below in the systematic consideration of the more substantial changes that took place. The motherhouses in this group are those in Brooklyn, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Brush, Colorado, and Axtell, Nebraska.

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[1] Report of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Lutheran Free Church, Minneapolis, June 11-17, 1924, "Report of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital," p. 87.

I. LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

The oldest Lutheran motherhouse in this group is that launched in Brooklyn in 1885.[1] A concern for the poor of Norwegian extraction and especially the sick among them led some Lutheran Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans to apply to the homeland for the services of a deaconess. Their plea was heard by Sister Elizabeth Fedde of the Christiania motherhouse in Oslo, who arrived in Brooklyn on April 9, 1883. Within a few days the Norwegian Relief Society was organized to support her and she began her work of visiting the poor and sick in their homes and in hospitals, bringing them both spiritual comfort and material help. The deaconess motherhouse was opened in 1885, when the society rented a house which accommodated both a nine-bed hospital and quarters for the deaconess and the probationers who were hoped for. Two came the same year, the first of them from Norway. In 1889 a thirty-bed hospital was built and in 1892 the society was incorporated as the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconesses' Home and Hospital.

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[1] The sources for the account of the early history of the Brooklyn motherhouse are (1) Beulah Folkedahl (trans. and ed.), "Elizabeth Fedde's Diary, 1883-88," *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*, vol. XX (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1959), pp. 170-96; (2) Erling N. Rolfsrud, *The Borrowed Sister: The Story of Elizabeth Fedde* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1953); and (3) *The Norwegian Lutheran Deaconesses' Home and Hospital, A Brief History* (Brooklyn, 1923).

Sister Elizabeth Fedde was "borrowed" again, this time in 1888, by Norwegians in Minneapolis among whom she had taken a brief vacation, and she became the first deaconess of the Minneapolis motherhouse. However she soon returned and continued as superintendent of the home and hospital in Brooklyn until, in 1895, both had been firmly established. In 1904 a new ninety-bed hospital was dedicated, and by 1908 a separate motherhouse building had been completed.

At the time the new motherhouse was finished in 1908 the Brooklyn sisterhood enjoyed its peak numerical strength, four consecrated deaconesses and nineteen probationers, a total of twenty-three. After a decline to fourteen in 1912 the total deaconess population again reached twenty-two in 1914, but since then the decline has been gradual but almost uninterrupted, as the summary shows, down to the present.

In 1916, at one of the periods of its greatest diversity of work, the Brooklyn motherhouse had, besides those working in the home and hospital, single deaconesses serving in hospital-based relief work in Brooklyn, in another hospital, in a city mission, in a mission to immigrants at Ellis Island, in a children's home, and in a Norwegian Lutheran parish in Brooklyn.[1] In

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[1] Proceedings and Papers of the Twelfth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Brooklyn, May 23, 1916, p. 7.

1922, the sisters had one of their number active in social service, two in parishes, and two in foreign missions, in the Sudan and China.[1] As the deaconess population began to shrink, no new fields could be entered and gradually the deaconesses had to be withdrawn from all stations but the hospital.

Brooklyn Motherhouse[2]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1897	5	-	8	13
1908	4	-	19	23
1918	8	-	10	18
1928	10	-	1	11
1938	10	-	2	12
1948	4	3	0	7
1959	3	1	0	4

In 1909, the very year after the population peak had been reached, it was necessary to begin a school of nursing. The supply of deaconesses, although it had been increasing at that time, was not growing as rapidly as the demand for service in the growing hospital. Now no deaconess student has been reported since 1936.

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[1] Proceedings, Fifteenth Conference, Omaha, 1922, p. 8.

[2] The figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference. The dash (-) represents the non-availability of relevant data.

The Norwegian Lutheran Deaconesses' Home and Hospital had been organized independent of the church, although its board had included pastors and other church members from the beginning. However in 1917, at the time when a merger of smaller groups brought the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America into existence, the Deaconess Home and Hospital declared its affiliation with and subsequently reported to that body.[1] This affiliation was re-affirmed in 1948, when the president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (after 1948 the Evangelical Lutheran Church) was a member at large of the board of trustees.[2] Thus the Deaconess Home and Hospital was invited to join the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the study of the future of deaconess work undertaken by the church's committee on the diaconate in 1946.[3] The consequences of this study will be examined below, in connection with the Chicago motherhouse.

Apart from the participation of the Brooklyn board in the deaconess study, and with reference to the question of any initiative taken by the Brooklyn motherhouse, the fact is that no changes in the conception of the deaconess or of her work took place throughout its history. The Brooklyn diaconate had been founded in the Kaiserswerth tradition. Sister Elizabeth Fedde, its first deaconess and directing sister for almost thirteen years, had been steeped in this tradition at the Christiania motherhouse in Oslo.[1] That institution had been organized in 1868 and directed until 1919 by Mother Superior Cathinka Guldberg, a native Norwegian who had received her training at Kaiserswerth itself.[2] Sister Elizabeth, as not only a graduate of Christiania but a close friend and admirer of Sister Cathinka,[3] brought a strong Kaiserswerth orientation to the founding of the Brooklyn motherhouse. (How decidedly all the Lutheran motherhouses in America were within this tradition will be indicated below, as the study develops.) With the minor exception of modification of the garb and permission to wear civilian clothes off duty, no changes from the Kaiserswerth pattern were introduced in the course of the history of the Brooklyn motherhouse.

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[1] Report of the Third Extraordinary General Convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, St. Paul, June 9-14, 1925, pp. 338-39.

[2] Annual Report, Norwegian Lutheran Deaconesses' Home and Hospital, Brooklyn, New York, 1948.

[3] Annual Report, Norwegian Hospital, Brooklyn, 1946.

The Norwegian Lutheran Deaconesses' Home and Hospital merged with the Lutheran Hospital of Manhattan in 1955 to become the Lutheran Medical Center.

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[1] Rolfsrud, op. cit., pp. 8-31.

[2] N. N. Ronning and W. H. Lien, They Followed Him (Minneapolis: Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, 1939), pp. 33-35.

[3] Rolfsrud, op. cit., pp. 57, 112.

II. LUTHERAN DEACONESS HOME AND HOSPITAL, MINNEAPOLIS

The next oldest of the diaconates in which no basic change has occurred is that of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Minneapolis.[1] The deaconess cause had already attracted the interest of a few leaders among the Norwegian-American Lutherans in Minneapolis when Sister Elizabeth Fedde of Brooklyn visited that city on a vacation in 1888. They prevailed upon her to ask the permission of the Brooklyn society to stay in Minneapolis just long enough to get a motherhouse started. The Brooklyn board consented and hospital work was begun almost at once in a house offered rent-free for two years by an interested layman. Sister Elizabeth as Sister Superior was assisted by two young sisters who volunteered as probationers; two more women presented themselves shortly afterward. In 1889 the sponsoring group was organized as the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Institute.

The Minneapolis motherhouse made a fairly strong beginning and had a noteworthy spurt in population just prior to the first world war, but it reached its population peak in 1914, when there were forty-eight deaconesses, fifteen consecrated and thirty-three probationers. By 1916 the number of probationers had fallen to eighteen and by 1918 to eleven. The decline has been steady in recent years. Now candidates are no longer accepted but are referred, if any appear, to other motherhouses.[1]

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[1] The sources for the account of the early history of the Minneapolis motherhouse are (1) Ronning and Lien, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-43; (2) Rolfsrud, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-86; (3) Herman L. Fritschel, "A Brief History of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America," *Proceedings and Papers*, Seventh Conference of Motherhouses, Philadelphia, April 21-22, 1908, pp. 46-47.

Minneapolis Motherhouse[2]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1897	9	-	20	29
1908	12	-	9	21
1914*	15	-	33	48
1918	15	-	11	26
1928	12	1	1	14
1938	11	-	3	14
1948	10	3	2	15
1959	4	5	-	9

*1914 is included because it was the peak year.

The hospital work continued to expand, as it has to the

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[1] Directing Sister Anna Bergeland, in conversation, August 29, 1960.

[2] The figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference. The dash (-) represents the non-availability of relevant data.

the present time, increasing the demand for service personnel. Accordingly the decline of the number of deaconesses to thirty-five, with only one candidate on the scene, together with the established readiness of young women to be trained as non-deaconess nurses, led to the founding of a school of nursing in 1916.[1] The school of nursing has prospered and, with the hospital having grown to a capacity of 275 beds, numbered 102 students in 1959.[2]

At the height of its numerical strength in 1914, the Minneapolis motherhouse counted forty sisters at work in the hospital, two at the Martha and Mary Orphan Home in Poulsbo, Washington, one at a home for the aged in St. Paul, Minnesota, one at the Grand Forks Deaconess Hospital, and four at the mission girls' school of the Lutheran Free Church in Madagascar.[3] In 1918, two deaconesses were at work in one more old persons' home and one was housemother in a girls' school in Fargo, North Dakota.[4]

In 1917 it was intended to make a beginning of training deaconesses for social work and one was sent to school in Chicago,[1] but because of the smallness of the number of deaconesses available and their current commitments, especially to the home hospital, social work education could not become a matter of policy. After hospital social service, no new kinds of work were attempted.

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[1] Ronning and Lien, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

[2] Report of the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, November 7, 1958, Minneapolis, p. 89.

[3] Proceedings, Eleventh Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Minneapolis, May 20-22, 1914, p. 7.

[4] Proceedings and Papers, Thirteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, St. Paul, May 28-30, 1918, p. 7.

In 1920, when there were nineteen deaconesses, it was reported that there had been no deaconess candidates since 1914.[2] The motherhouse reported in 1925 that the board of directors was considering a shorter course for women who wanted to do church-related charity work, but did not wish to become deaconesses "under the old rules."[3] The intention was to give these persons some study of the Bible and some training in the care of the sick,[4] but the idea was not developed further.

Efforts were still being made in 1933 to recruit candidates for the diaconate through the preparation of printed folders for church youth conventions. It was also announced that the rules had been revised to require that a candidate be twenty to thirty years of age and a high school graduate. "It is desirable that all candidates take the nurses' training if possible. . . . it is necessary in our time for a deaconess to be on a par as to education and training with Christian workers in similar service."[1]

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[1] 28th Annual Report of the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Institute, Minneapolis, 1917, p. 17.

[2] 31st Annual Report, Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Institute, Minneapolis, 1920, pp. 9, 11.

[3] Report of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Lutheran Free Church, Minneapolis, June 9-14, 1925, p. 112.

[4] Ibid.

There has never been an organic connection of the deaconess motherhouse with the Lutheran Free Church, although the founders of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital had been the leading spirits of the Lutheran Free Church.[2] In 1920, in the hope that it would help the Deaconess Home and Hospital to locate funds needed for expansion, it was decided to offer regular reports to the Lutheran Free Church and to ask the church to nominate members to the board of directors.[3] The Lutheran Free Church printed the

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[1] Report, Thirty-Seventh Annual Convention, Lutheran Free Church, Minneapolis, 1933, p. 64.

[2] Report of the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, Minneapolis, November 4, 1959, p. 4. The Lutheran Free Church is one of the smaller Lutheran church bodies in the United States. It reported a membership of 82,595 in 1959. See Benson Y. Landis, (ed.) Yearbook of American Churches (New York: Office of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches, 1960), p. 255.

[3] 31st Annual Report of the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Institute, Minneapolis, 1920, p. 13.

the first of these reports in 1922.[1] However the latter part of the proposal had not been made effective when it was urged in 1959 to make the Deaconess Home and Hospital a "church-related institution" through an official relationship of the institution with the Lutheran Free Church congregations in the Twin Cities.[2] On the other hand, the Lutheran Free Church has recognized the Home and Hospital as its own to the extent of repeatedly adopting resolutions in annual conventions asking its members to contribute to the benevolence fund of the Deaconess Hospital and thus to help to underwrite its charity work and also to support it in other ways.[3]

In 1938, when there were fourteen deaconesses, concern about the declining fortunes of the diaconate led the board of directors to establish a committee on the deaconess work, which reported annually thereafter. There were continual calls for deaconess service, but only an occasional candidate to report.

The committee produced no proposals looking to a revision of the deaconess idea, beyond a modest one for a modernization of the garb in 1946.[1] Everything tended to remain fixed in the Kaiserswerth pattern. Sister Elizabeth Fedde who founded the sisterhood had not stayed long, but her successor, Sister Ingeborg Sponland, who came in 1891 and remained until 1904, was imbued with the same ideals, as she was a graduate of the same motherhouse in Oslo.[2] Deaconesses And Their Calling by Frederick Meyer, one of the German motherhouse pastors, was the text-book at Minneapolis in 1897; it was replaced by a translation into Norwegian of the more substantial but equally Kaiserswerthian text of Emil Wacker: The Deaconess Calling.[3] When the last rector moved over to become chaplain of the hospital, in January 1935,[4] it was only because of the lack of sufficient numbers of deaconesses and candidates in the motherhouse to require the continuance of the rector's office. No candidates at all were reported in the 1930's.[5] The few candidates who appeared in the 1940's were sent to the Lutheran Bible Institute in Minneapolis, a non-accredited school of religion for lay persons, for one year before taking their nurses' training.[1]

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[1] Report of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Lutheran Free Church, Minneapolis, June 6-12, 1922, pp. 160-63.

[2] Report, Board of Directors to Annual Meeting, November 4, 1959, p. 4.

[3] E.g., Report, Thirty-Sixth Annual Convention, Lutheran Free Church, 1932, p. 102.

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[1] Report of Board of Directors to Annual Meeting, October 18, 1946.

[2] Ronning and Lien, op. cit., pp. 49-54. [3] Ibid., p. 48.

[4] Proceedings, Twenty-Second Conference, Lutheran Motherhouse, Omaha, September 27-29, 1936, p. 6.

[5] Statistical reports, Lutheran Deaconess Conference, 1930-1940.

In 1953, the board of directors decided to approach the Evangelical Lutheran Church to discuss the possibility of cooperating with that church in its study of what might be done about the future of deaconess work.[2] The Evangelical Lutheran Church responded by cordially inviting the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital representatives to sit in on its Commission on Diaconic Service and share in the exploration.[3] The findings of that commission will be considered below, in connection with the Chicago motherhouse.

However not much hope for a revival of the diaconate remains in Minneapolis. The hope was expressed there as early as 1939 that the diaconate might live on as the spirit of serving love permeating all the work of the Deaconess Hospital.[4]

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[1] Directing Sister Anna Bergeland, in conversation, August 29, 1960.

[2] Report of the Board of Directors to Annual Meeting, October 16, 1953, pp. 3-5.

[3] Report, Board of Directors to Annual Meeting, November 5, 1954, p. 2.

[4] Ronning and Lien, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

III. BETHESDA DEACONESS HOME, ST. PAUL

Continuing the survey of deaconess motherhouses without a significant history from the standpoint of this study, the next oldest is seen to be the Bethesda Deaconess Home in St. Paul, Minnesota, founded in 1902.[1] This institution was like the Baltimore motherhouse in that it was entirely church-owned and church controlled and was unique in belonging to a regional subdivision of an autonomous Lutheran church body; it is also the only Lutheran motherhouse to be taken account of in this study that has entirely passed out of existence.

The Minnesota Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America had made a premature effort to have a hospital of its own as early as 1880, but the attempt had to be abandoned. In 1891 Bethesda Hospital was opened again, this time with a staff of deaconesses secured from the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha, organized in 1887 by fellow-members of the same Augustana Synod.[2] The hospital work prospered and in 1896 the hospital was enlarged to provide a capacity of sixty beds. In order to meet an acute shortage of personnel, the Minnesota Conference voted in 1902 to establish its own motherhouse in connection with the hospital. The first probationers were received in 1903 and the first consecration took place in 1906. The Minnesota Conference elected the nine members of the board of directors.

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[1] The source for the account of the early history of the St. Paul motherhouse is Herman L. Fritschel, "A Brief History of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America," Proceedings and Papers, Seventh Conference of Lutheran Motherhouses, Philadelphia, April 21-22, 1908, p. 44.

[2] The Immanuel Deaconess Institute is discussed below, in the section on Other Lutheran Diaconates -- Group II.

The motherhouse enjoyed a modest growth at the start, as the ten year figures indicate. The population peak was attained in 1912 when the motherhouse had twelve consecrated deaconesses and sixteen probationers, a total of twenty-six sisters. There was a decline thereafter, and a sharp drop after 1924, when there were sixteen deaconesses and four probationers.[1] In May 1930 there were only six consecrated deaconesses and one probationer;[2] in April of the same year the Minnesota Conference voted to merge the motherhouse with the Omaha house, from which it had taken its origin.[3] On October 1, 1930, the Bethesda Deaconess Home closed its doors, and its seven sisters were received into the sisterhood of the Omaha motherhouse.[1] The Bethesda Hospital continued to thrive.

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[1] *Vide* Statistical Reports, Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Proceedings and Papers*, Nineteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Columbus, Ohio, May 12-13, 1930, p. 6.

St. Paul Motherhouse[2]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1908	5	-	13	18
1912*	12	-	16	28
1918	14	-	9	23
1928	9	1	3	13

*The year 1912 is the year of peak population.

The Bethesda motherhouse stationed its sisters in a variety of kinds of work much like that of the other houses. Deaconesses served in, besides the Bethesda Hospital, the related Bethesda children's home, Bethesda home for the aged, and Bethesda home for invalids, several parishes, a city mission, a mission to the Jews, a young women's hospice, and a foreign mission enterprise in China.[3]

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[1] Proceedings and Papers, Twentieth Conference, Lutheran Deaconess Institutions, Brooklyn, April 20-21, 1933, p. 6.

[2] The figures are taken from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

[3] Proceedings and Papers of the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses: Eighth, Omaha, 1910, p. 9; Ninth, Chicago, 1912, p. 8; Tenth, Baltimore, 1913, p. 8; Fifteenth, Omaha, 1922, p. 8.

The first directing sister, Sister Bothilda Swenson, who had been first directing deaconess at Omaha, had been educated at the Philadelphia motherhouse and therefore in St. Paul, too, everything tended to be arranged according to the Kaiserswerth model. The solitary record of educational experiment that survives indicates that in 1922 the candidates at the Bethesda motherhouse were being given their religious education at the Lutheran Bible Institute of St. Paul, a non-accredited school of biblical studies for lay persons similar to the institution of the same name in Minneapolis, used in the 1940's by the Minneapolis motherhouse.[1]

IV. EBEN-EZER LUTHERAN HOME AND HOSPITAL, BRUSH, COLORADO

Another dimension of United States Lutheranism is encountered in the Eben-Ezer Lutheran Home and Hospital of Brush, Colorado, namely that of Danish-American Lutheranism.[2] The founder was the Reverend Jens Madsen, himself a sufferer from tuberculosis who sought a cure in the dry and elevated Colorado climate. After recovering and accepting the call to become pastor of the small Lutheran congregation in Brush, Madsen began to invite other tubercular patients to come to Brush and enjoy the same benefits. Gathering some Lutheran pastors and laymen about him as a board of trustees in 1903, Madsen purchased property near Brush and began to go from church to church among the two Danish Lutheran synods, on behalf of his home for the sick, to raise funds and interest workers.

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[1] Proceedings, Fifteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Omaha, October 31 - November 2, 1922, p. 10.

[2] The chief sources for the account of the history of the Brush motherhouse are (1) "A Little History," Phoebe, L, 5 (Sept.-Oct., 1954), pp. 5-17 (Phoebe is a bi-monthly paper published by the Eben-Ezer Home and Hospital and named after the first deaconess, mentioned in Romans 16: 1); (2) the Report of the Annual Convention of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (prior to 1952, the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church), referred to as Report, UELC; and (3) Herman L. Fritschel, "A Brief History," Proceedings and Papers, Lutheran Motherhouse Conference, 1908, pp. 49-50.

A feature of Madsen's recruitment was his winning of two men to come to Brush as "deacons." They were deacons in the tradition of the male diaconate established by Wichern in Hamburg in 1833, that is to say, in almost every respect they were the male counterparts of Fliedner's deaconesses.[1] The Brush deacons, competent artisans and religiously motivated, were able both to build buildings and to comfort the patients. Ground was broken in 1904 and the first unit, a sanatorium, was dedicated in 1906.

Meanwhile, in 1905, there were volunteers for the female diaconate. The first was already a trained nurse who was later sent to Copenhagen for deaconess instruction. The later volunteers were sent for training to the motherhouses at Omaha, Philadelphia,[1] and Milwaukee.[2] One deaconess, after two years at Dana College was sent to a technical school for training as a laboratory and x-ray technician.[3]

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[1] Jeremiah F. Ohl, The Inner Mission (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1913), pp. 65-69.

The motherhouse pastor conducted many services of worship for the patients and diaconate and many hours of Bible study, but only in one year is it recorded that basic instruction in deaconess work was provided.[4]

The sisterhood (as well as the brotherhood) remained very small, as the population figures indicate.

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[1] Report of the Thirty-First Annual Convention of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, June 7-12, 1927, p. 68.

[2] Report, the Forty-Third Annual Convention of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oakland, California, June 12-18, 1939, p. 65.

[3] Phoebe, XXXVII, 4 (April, 1941), p. 34; XXXVIII, 1 (January, 1942), p. 7; L, 5 (September-October, 1954), p. 15.

[4] Phoebe, XXXVII, 4 (April, 1941), p. 35.

Brush Motherhouse[1]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1908	1	-	2	3
1918	3	-	1	4
1922*; 1924*	4	-	3	7
1928	4	-	1	5
1938	4	-	1	5
1942*	5	-	2	7
1948	6	-	0	6
1959	1	4	0	5

*1922, 1924, and 1942 were the years of peak population.

A home for old people was added in 1907, a small hospital in 1915, and a church in 1918. The hospital was enlarged in the 1940's. By 1941 there were no more tubercular patients, their places having been taken up through the years by invalids: the chronically sick, epileptic, crippled, and blind.[2]

The board of trustees of the Eben-Ezer Home and Hospital was self-perpetuating. The members were drawn from the two

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[1] The figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

[2] _Vide_ also _Phoebe_, XXXVII (August, 1941), p. 59.

Danish Lutheran synods -- four from the American Evangelical Lutheran Church and five from the United Evangelical Lutheran Church[1] -- but the institute itself remained a private corporation without official connection with either church body until after Madsen's death. Some congregations in both Danish-American synods took up special collections for the home and hospital on the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity each year,[2] and the synods encouraged this from time to time. In 1952 the board changed its constitution to provide for the election of board members by the two synods.[3]

Eben-Ezer, with its extremely small population, was never able to be a full-fledged teaching motherhouse. It was bound in the nature of its situation to let other motherhouses work out the changes from the Fliedner pattern through which the diaconate might sustain itself.

V. BETHPHAGE INNER MISSION ASSOCIATION, AXTELL, NEBRASKA

The fifth motherhouse in the present group was established at Axtell, Nebraska, under the auspices of the Bethphage Inner

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[1] Report, UELC, Medicine Lake, Minn., June 8-13, 1937, p. 86.

[2] Report, UELC, Blair, Nebraska, June 2-7, 1936, p. 87.

[3] Report, UELC, June 17-22, 1952, p. 84.

Mission Association, founded in 1913.[1] The founder, the Reverend K. G. William Dahl, had translated Julie Sutter's description of the complex of charitable institutions called Bethel, at Bielefeld, Germany, while in seminary and served during his early ministry as assistant pastor at the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha. It was his concern to found a Christian home for "epileptics, feeble-minded, and mentally defective; destitute and aged; incurables, etc."[2] He went at his purpose with daring and intensity, as if he knew he had only a few years to live, as soon as he became pastor of Bethphage Church in Axtell.

Dahl counted from the start on the emergence of male and female diaconates like those of Bielefeld, to supply the needed personnel, just as he counted on the influx of funds. The first deacon candidate was received in 1914 and was sent for brief periods of training to the Eben-Ezer institution in Brush, the Bethesda Deaconess Home and Hospital in St. Paul, and the Passavant Home for Epileptics in Rochester, Pennsylvania. The first deaconess candidate appeared a few months later and was also sent to Eben-Ezer for two months of training. A sister from the

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[1] The chief sources for the account of the Axtell motherhouse are (1) Arthur A. Christenson, A Miracle of the Prairies (Axtell, Nebraska: The Bethphage Mission, 1944); and (2) the Bethphage Messenger, a monthly publication of the Bethphage Inner Mission Association. The latter is referred to as Bethphage Msger.

[2] From the Articles of Incorporation of the Association, quoted in Bethphage Msger, XLI, 10 (October, 1953), p. 3.

Bethesda motherhouse became the first cottage mother. Another young deaconess, who had had nurse's training at the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha, was made directing sister in 1915 and became the first deaconess to be consecrated at Bethphage in 1916.

Bethphage did not join the Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America until 1938,[1] and its population figures do not appear in the conference tables until 1940. However figures for earlier years can be derived from a history of the institution written by one of its directors.[2]

Bethphage Motherhouse

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1918	3	-	1	4
1928	8	-	1	9
1938	13	-	0	13
1948	12	-	3	15
1959	9	4	0	13

The population figures at the ten year intervals show a remarkable stability until recently. However in 1958 the director had to confess that "indications are that the Bethphage sisterhood is on the wane."[1] In 1959 there were still twelve sisters and one brother in the Bethphage diaconates; but two of the sisters were retired, one was inactive, and all but four were eligible for retirement.[2] The brothers had numbered three at the most. The last one resigned as a brother, although not as a housefather, in 1960.[3]

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[1] Proceedings, Twenty-Third Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Philadelphia, June 19-21, 1938, p. 8.

[2] Christenson, op. cit., p. 77.

The institution had grown, even though the diaconate had not. Separate buildings had been constructed for men, women, children, workers, an infirmary, and a chapel. There were 225 guests in 1958 and almost seventy additional employees of all classifications.[4]

The work of the Bethphage diaconate was confined almost entirely to the institution, although in the years 1951-1955 two deaconesses were reported to be operating a rest home in Colorado Springs.[5] The care given at Bethphage was for a long time custodial rather than therapeutic; hence there was not much professional nursing required, and no nurse training was ever attempted. The sisters who were to receive nurses' training were sent in recent years to the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha.[1] Since 1951 one deaconess has been serving in the capacity of occupational therapist.[2]

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[1] Bethphage Msger., XLVI, 7 (July, 1958), p. 4.

[2] Bethphage Msger., XLVII, 8 (August 1959), p. 2.

[3] Bethphage Msger., XLVIII, 8 (August, 1960), p. 6.

[4] Bethphage Msger., XLVI, 2 (February, 1958), pp. 6, 11.

[5] Proceedings, Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America, Philadelphia, 1951, p. 52; Brush, 1953, p. 37; Axtell, 1955, p. 42.

The motherhouse family is a local congregation of the Augustana Church,[3] but it is only recently that the Bethphage mission has applied for recognition as an institution of the church; the recognition is still in process of being acted on.[4]

It is again at Bethphage a story of heroic labors, performed in this case as at Brush by pioneering deacons as well as deaconesses; the labors of the diaconate have gone into the foundations of the institution. But the diaconate itself has not had a history of developing with the institution, and does not seem able to survive much longer. Bethphage exhibits some differences from the classical Kaiserswerth pattern, not only in admitting deacons as well as deaconesses, but also in not considering the training of a diaconate -- but rather the care of incurables -- as its primary objective, and in not developing a hospital for training purposes. But the innovations seem to offer no strategic suggestions for building the diaconate.

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[1] Proceedings, Twenty-Fourth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Milwaukee, June 19-21, 1940, p. 18.

[2] Bethphage Msger., XLI, 10 (October, 1953), pp. 6-7.

[3] Reported in a letter from Directing Sister Julianne Holt, May 5, 1958.

[4] Report of the 100th Synod of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hartford, Conn., June 15-21, 1959, p. 242; Report of the 101st Synod, Augustana, Rock Island, Ill., June 6-12, 1960, p. 284.

VI. SUMMARY

Great labors of love were performed by the diaconates of the institutions just reviewed. Unfortunately they cannot receive here the celebration they deserve. The concern of this study is the history of the conception of the deaconess and of her proper work and education since 1918.

At least one of the institutions considered above -- the Minneapolis motherhouse -- started out in the Kaiserswerth tradition of putting the training of deaconesses before everything else. The others seem to have been primarily concerned with the relief of misery in a certain area and to have regarded the diaconate as a means to the end sought. Nevertheless in both types of institution the diaconate, kept in its traditional form, was unable to thrive. In every case the hospital or other charitable agency has prospered, the deaconess service has been built into the foundations of its prospering, but other kinds of helpers than deaconesses have had to be drafted to carry on the work, because the supply of deaconesses could not keep up with the demands for service.

CHAPTER XIII

OTHER LUTHERAN DIACONATES -- GROUP II

It is necessary to turn now to a group of Lutheran motherhouses that have made more or less strenuous efforts to keep the female diaconate moving with the times. These are the motherhouses in Milwaukee, Omaha, Chicago, and Fort Wayne. It is proposed now to identify each of them in terms of its origin and general character in 1918.

I. THE LUTHERAN DEACONESS MOTHERHOUSE, MILWAUKEE

The account of the remaining Lutheran deaconess establishments begins with the motherhouse in Milwaukee. Not only has this been one of the stronger houses through the years, but this is the motherhouse that carries forward the oldest deaconess tradition in the United States, that begun by W. A. Passavant.

Passavant is one of the outstanding names in American Lutheranism. The work that made this a powerful name was chiefly what Lutherans call "the inner mission." The inner mission combines a number of aspects: it is concerned with doing deeds of love in the name of Christ for the needy -- the sick, the imprisoned, the handicapped, the aged, the orphan. It does its deeds of love in behalf of the church, as a means of bringing to expression and making effective the energy of love that may be expected to be present in the church and (ideally)seeks to be put to work. Furthermore the inner mission does its work with the intention of thereby recommending the love and gospel of Christ to those whom it serves; that is, its works of mercy are a form of evangelism.[1] The inner mission has been an important concept in Lutheranism since it was commended to the church by Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-1881) beginning in 1833 in Hamburg. Wichern launched his training and employment of deacons in inner mission work only a little while before Fliedner began his deaconess work.[2]

Passavant, pastor of a General Council congregation in Pittsburgh, was powerfully attracted by the inner mission. He visited Europe and studied it, especially in the form it took at Kaiserswerth, and in 1846 before he returned to the United States he contracted with Fliedner for the sending of some sisters in order that the deaconess work might be transplanted to America.[3] Meanwhile he made ready to receive them by founding a hospital called the Pittsburgh Infirmary, the "first Protestant

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[1] Cf. Jeremiah F. Ohl, The Inner Mission (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1913), pp. 15-22.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 65-69.

[3] Herman L. Fritschel, One Hundred Years of Deaconess Service (Milwaukee: Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, 1949), p. 16.

Church hospital in America."[1]

When Fliedner himself arrived in 1849 with four deaconesses, a great dedication took place and the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses was shortly thereafter (1850) chartered by the state of Pennsylvania. The choice of the name of the institution was no doubt determined by Fliedner's use of the same phrase in his English language publications to describe his own institution at Kaiserswerth.[2]

The first young woman in the United States to become a deaconess, Miss Louisa Marthens, a member of Passavant's congregation in Pittsburgh, was consecrated in 1850.[3] There were others in the years that followed, but Passavant seems never to have organized a full-blown motherhouse, perhaps because he was absorbed in the other institutions that sprang up so readily in his wake. An orphans' home was added to the hospital in 1852, inheriting the older hospital building that was at that time vacated for a new one. It was followed by the Orphans' Home and Farm School in Zelienople, Pennsylvania (1854); an orphans' home in Germantown, Pennsylvania (1859); the Wartburg Orphans' Home in Mt. Vernon, New York (1866); and a new seat of the original

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[1] Ibid., p. 17. [2] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[3] Ibid., pp. 25-28.

Pittsburgh home in Rochester, Pennsylvania.[1]

In 1863, in response to requests from local people, Passavant got the Milwaukee Hospital launched; in 1865 he started the hospital in Chicago which later became the Passavant Hospital, and in 1875 a hospital in Jacksonville, Illinois. He was also the founder of Thiel College in Greenville, Pennsylvania, (1866), and of a Lutheran theological seminary in Chicago.[2]

It was not until the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses called the Reverend Jeremiah Ohl to be chaplain of the Milwaukee Hospital and Assistant Director of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses in 1893 that a motherhouse was organized.[3] At the end of the first year a community of seven consecrated deaconesses and eight probationers had been organized.[4] Ohl was a genuine student of the inner mission, of which he was a foremost interpreter to American Lutherans in his volume, The Inner Mission, and like the other motherhouse pastors he was zealous to establish his house according to the classical European idea.[5]

Ohl was succeeded as rector in 1899 by the Reverend W. A.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 38-43. [2] Ibid., pp. 43-53.

[3] Ibid., p. 66. [4] Ibid., p. 69.

[5] Ibid., pp. 68-69.

Passavant, Jr., who was already General Director of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses.[1] Passavant died in 1901 and his successor in both offices was the Reverend Herman A. Fritschel.[2] Fritschel's tenure as rector of the motherhouse lasted until 1921, as general director of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses until 1928, and as President of the board of directors of the Milwaukee Hospital until 1943. The contributions of all three of these men in the _Papers and Proceedings_ of the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses indicate their strong loyalty to the Fliedner principles of deaconess work and education.

The population figures indicate that the Milwaukee motherhouse reached its peak in numbers of deaconesses in 1940, when there were fifty-one consecrated deaconesses and twelve probationers, a total of sixty-three sisters. In 1944 again a total of sixty-three was reported.

The work assignments of the Milwaukee deaconesses in 1918 were entirely in health and welfare institutions. Besides the Milwaukee Hospital, where twenty-four were at work, and the motherhouse, where five were employed, the following institutions were being served: the Passavant Hospital, Pittsburgh, five deaconesses; three homes for aged persons, seven deaconesses; a home for orphans, four deaconesses; and a home for epileptics, six deaconesses.[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 71. [2] _Ibid_., pp. 73-74.

Milwaukee Motherhouse[2]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1897	7	-	15	22
1908	20	-	25	45
1918	26	-	25	51
1928	41	2	9	52
1938	46	1	13	60
1940*	50	1	12	63
1948	46	6	3	55
1959	26	18	10	54

*1940 was the year of peak population.

II. THE IMMANUEL DEACONESS INSTITUTE, OMAHA

The motherhouse at Omaha owed its founding to the Reverend Eric A. Fogelstrom, a minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America, which was of Swedish-American background.[1] Pastor of Immanuel Church in Omaha, Fogelstrom founded the Immanuel Association for Works of Mercy in 1887, with the intention of building a deaconess hospital; in the same year the future first directing sister was sent from the Immanuel congregation to the Philadelphia motherhouse to begin her deaconess training. Three more students were sent in 1888 and a fifth in 1889, and when the hospital was ready to open in 1890, the five deaconesses were ready to operate it. The original sponsoring association was succeeded in 1892 by the Immanuel Deaconess Association.

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[1] Proceedings and Papers of the Twelfth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, Brooklyn, May 25, 1916, p. 6.

[2] These figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference. The dash (-) represents non-availability of relevant data.

In following years the hospital was enlarged repeatedly, and additional facilities were established for the care of orphans and neglected children (1901) and chronic invalids and aged persons (1903). Fogelstrom resigned his pastorate in 1889 to give full time to his task as the first rector and served until 1906, when illness forced him to retire. In 1904 the Augustana Synod assumed "full ownership and charge"[2] of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute and began to elect the board of managers as well as to have the right to elect the rector.

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[1] The sources for this account of the origin of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute are Herman L. Fritschel, "A Brief History of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America," Proceedings and Papers of the Seventh Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, April 21-22, 1908, pp. 42-43; and historical notes in the Deaconess Banner, IV, 3 (June, 1924), p. 5; V, 5 (January, 1926), p. 2; and XXI, 6 (April, 1942), pp. 1-3, 11.

[2] Deaconess Banner, XVII, 1(June, 1937), p. 6.

The population figures for the Omaha motherhouse, at the ten year intervals used above, are as follows:

Omaha Motherhouse[1]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1897	9	-	18	27
1908	24	-	14	38
1918	38	-	8	46
1928	34	1	4	39
1938	54	4	12	70
1948	43	28	12	83
1953*	54	17	21	92
1959	43	27	4	74

*1953 was the year of peak population.

In contrast with the diaconates that had attained their highest population figures before 1918, the Omaha motherhouse reached its peak as recently as 1953, when there were ninety-two sisters on the roll.

The work of the Omaha deaconesses was very similar to that of the other Lutheran deaconesses in 1918: besides the variety of labors on the Omaha campus (hospital: twenty-two deaconesses; children's home: two deaconesses; home for aged and invalid: six deaconesses) there were deaconesses serving in parishes: four; inner mission agencies: two; homes for the aged: three; a woman's hospice: one; another church hospital: two; and a mission station in China: one.[1] The three deaconesses unaccounted for in this analysis were no doubt working in the motherhouse. The education was essentially the same as in the other hospital-based motherhouses, training chiefly for nursing and institutional work, as for example in the Philadelphia motherhouse. The Kaiserswerth conceptions and ideals were in full force in 1918. The Immanuel Deaconess Institute had joined the Kaiserswerth General Conference in 1901,[2] and the constitution of the Institute[3] indicates how faithfully these principles were being adhered to.

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[1] From the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

III. THE LUTHERAN DEACONESS HOME AND HOSPITAL, CHICAGO

In the meantime, among the Norwegian-Americans in Chicago, and not entirely independently of the efforts in Brooklyn, another deaconess motherhouse had been established.[1] The original impulse came from a sermon on the female diaconate in 1885 by a visiting pastor from Brooklyn, A. Mortensen, who had been active in establishing the Brooklyn motherhouse. The response was prompt and the Norwegian Lutheran Tabita Society was organized. However a strong difference developed between those who were interested only in a Norwegian hospital and those who wanted a deaconess home as well, and as a consequence a lasting deaconess work did not get under way until a new society, the Norwegian Lutheran Deaconess Society of Chicago, was chartered in 1896. A deaconess home and hospital were opened in a rented house in 1897. The first acting sister superior was secured from the Christiania motherhouse in Norway, and the second from the Norwegian Lutheran deaconess institution in Minneapolis. A hospital building including deaconess quarters was built in 1903 and in the same year the first rector was installed. In 1900 the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America took the initiative in seeking to acquire the property and become responsible for its operation; by the end of 1904 the property of the deaconess society was deeded to the church, the latter electing the board of trustees and also the rector and sister superior.

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[1] Proceedings of the Thirteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, St. Paul, May 28-30, 1918, p. 7.

[2] Fritschel, "A Brief History etc.," Proceedings and Papers, 1908, p. 43.

[3] Published in the Annual Report of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute for 1922, pp. 30-35.

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[1] The sources of this account of the origin of the Deaconess Home and Hospital of Chicago are Fritschel, "A Brief History," Proceedings and Papers, 1908, pp. 47-48; and The Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, Annual Report, May, 1918 - May, 1919, Chicago, pp. 10-12.

Sister Ingeborg Sponland, also a graduate of the Christiania motherhouse in Oslo and formerly sister superior in Minneapolis, was called as the first permanent sister superior in 1905 and she continued in this office until her retirement in 1936.[1] Thus the Chicago motherhouse, too, was assured of a strong Kaiserswerth orientation in its formative years.

The Chicago motherhouse was not one of the strongest in the period upon which this study is focussed, and it has become as nearly defunct as some of those dismissed from further consideration above. It remains of importance because it succeeded in interesting the Evangelical Lutheran Church in rethinking the whole conception of the diaconate.

The work being done in 1918 when the motherhouse strength was near its peak, was reported as follows: in the home hospital, twenty-eight deaconesses; a motherhouse-operated kindergarten, three deaconesses; the related nursery, one deaconess; a "charity station," one deaconess; a mission to Jews, one deaconess; other hospitals, five deaconesses; two homes for aged persons, three deaconesses; college nurse, one deaconess; six stations in China, seven deaconesses; a mission in Madagascar, three deaconesses; parish work, one deaconess.[1] The five deaconesses unaccounted for in this distribution may be assumed to have been employed in the motherhouse.

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[1] N. N. Ronning and W. H. Lien, They Followed Him (Minneapolis: Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, 1939), p. 50.

Chicago Motherhouse[2]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1897	1	-	3	4
1908	16	-	37	53
1912*	23	-	51	74
1918	37	-	22	59
1928	42	-	3	45
1938	35	1	5	41
1948	27	8	2	37
1959	20	14	1	35

*1912 was the year of peak population.

The Brooklyn and Chicago motherhouses were the two deaconess homes that were related to the Evangelical (formerly Norwegian) Lutheran Church when the latter was in process of merging with the American Lutheran Church in 1960. The consequence of the merger is a new "The American Lutheran Church," which brought the Brooklyn and Chicago motherhouses under the same church roof as the Milwaukee motherhouse.

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[1] _Proceedings and Papers_, Thirteenth Conference, 1918, pp. 7-8.

[2] The figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

IV. THE LUTHERAN DEACONESS ASSOCIATION, FORT WAYNE

The last of the Lutheran diaconates was established within the constituency of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod in 1919, in connection with the Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana.[1] A chief founder was the Reverend Philip Wambsganss, Jr., the son of one of the four deaconesses who accompanied Fliedner to Pittsburgh in 1849, in response to Passavant's call. The earliest recorded impulse came from the Reverend Fred W. Herzberger, city missionary in St. Louis, who had seen in his work the need for more women church workers to help the poor, the sick, the lonely and forgotten. Herzberger read a paper at a meeting of the Associated Lutheran Charities at Fort Wayne in 1911 on the question of taking up the revived female diaconate. Wambsganss as president of the charities conference kept the question alive. The Associated Charities ultimately decided in 1919 to effect the organization of a Lutheran Deaconess Association, an independent corporation in the service of the church, with Wambsganss as president.

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[1] The source for this account of the origin of the Lutheran Deaconess Association is H. B. Kohlmeier, "History of the Lutheran Deaconess Association Within the Synodical Conference of North America," 1944, MS in the file of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne. Kohlmeier was executive director of the association from 1932 to 1941.

The new association petitioned the Lutheran hospital in Fort Wayne to undertake the training of deaconesses in its school of nursing. The hospital agreed. The student deaconesses were to be admitted to the same course with the other nursing students and to receive additional instruction, provided by the association, in the Bible, Luther's _Small Catechism_, and _A Handbook on Deaconess Work_, written for them by P. E. Kretzmann. The first candidate was admitted in 1919; the course of instruction began in 1921, and the first deaconess was graduated in 1922. The first motherhouse building was a residence bought and moved to the hospital grounds. Wambsganss was superintendent of the motherhouse as well as president of the association and pastor of a Lutheran congregation in Fort Wayne.

The Articles of Incorporation of the Lutheran Deaconess Association (January 1920) indicate that the purpose of the organization was entirely in the Kaiserswerth tradition: the education of Lutheran deaconesses for the care of "the sick and the poor in the congregations" and for "the administering of charity and mercy in the charitable institutions and in the home and foreign mission work" of the church.[1]

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[1] Quoted by Kohlmeier, _op_. _cit_., pp. 13-14.

Lutheran Deaconess Association[1]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1922*	1	-	8	9
1928	23	-	36	59
1938	-	-	-	51
1948	33	7	24	64
1959	67	10	86	163

*1922 was the year of the first report.

The Lutheran Deaconess Association never joined the Lutheran Deaconess Conference, but it has cooperated in filing statistical reports. From these it is evident that the deaconesses of the Lutheran Deaconess Association have become the most rapidly growing sisterhood of all the American groups. After a peak of seventy-three deaconesses in 1933, the Fort Wayne diaconate declined to forty-seven in 1944 but since that time has succeeded in expanding its student and consecrated groups with the greatest success of any American diaconate.

V. THE KAISERSWERTH TRADITION IN THE LUTHERAN MOTHERHOUSES

It was observed earlier that until the merger that produced the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918, the Philadelphia and Baltimore motherhouses were related to two separate Lutheran church bodies, the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America and the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America respectively. It is now evident that the other Lutheran motherhouses were related in one way or another to seven additional autonomous Lutheran church bodies. This fact in itself, however, does not guarantee the diversity of the motherhouses concerned. These Lutheran church bodies, regional and national groupings of Lutheran congregations, represented different European national backgrounds and were not only completely autonomous and frequently competitive, but even lacked any instruments of cooperative activity until 1918, when concern for servicemen's welfare and provision of military chaplains laid the basis for the National Lutheran Council, in which all but the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod were represented. The deaconess motherhouses that developed within the more or less sheltering structures of these various Lutheran church bodies were politically free, therefore, to be quite individualistic.

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[1] The figures are from the statistical reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

However, the motherhouses were actually remarkably alike. Two facts were closely connected with this. One was that the leaders of all the various Lutheran deaconess movements in the United States -- the pastors and sisters superior -- were alike in drawing their inspiration from the same European motherhouse models, and especially from Kaiserswerth, Fliedner's own creation. The second fact is that the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, founded in 1896, not only permitted motherhouse pastors, sisters superior, and board members to compare notes, but more than anything else in the early decades institutionalized and solidified the general reverence toward Kaiserswerth. This is illustrated in the papers read at the conference meetings. There were thirteen meetings of the conference between September 1896 and May 1918. In the course of these meetings papers on some aspect of the theory of deaconess work were presented by the pastors of all but one of the nine Lutheran motherhouses then flourishing. All these papers exhibited a common point of view, either explaining or defending the European precedents as they bore on the deaconess problems in America.[1]

The fact that the Fundamental Principles of the Kaiserswerth Conference, which had made Fliedner's solutions regulatory for many European motherhouses, were adopted without objection by the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America in 1904 further illustrates the common desire to be guided by the same ideals.[1] The Fundamental Principles dealt with the responsibilities of the pastor and sister superior and the duties and privileges of the sisters and touched on the garb, the economic cooperative, and the sisters' rights in the motherhouse.[2]

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[1] The papers are collected in the Papers and Proceedings of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference.

It is also significant that the Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, getting under way in 1896, was by far the earliest of all the cooperative enterprises in the history of inter-Lutheran church affairs in the United States,[3] indicating that it was in deaconess work if anywhere that Lutherans were capable of unanimity.

The community of outlook in the conference is exemplified further by several incidents in which a common effort was made in the conference to solve problems common to all the motherhouses. In 1920 a committee was elected to outline a detailed course of instruction for deaconess candidates and probationers.[1] Nothing came of the course, but in 1924 the conference voted to establish a standing committee on education to provide information and suggestions to motherhouses with educational problems.[2] The first specific task given to the committee was to prepare a reading course for sisters, such as might follow the basic course. This assignment was given to a committee again in 1930.[3]

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[1] Proceedings and Papers of the Fifth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, April 26-28, 1904, p. 9.

[2] Ibid., pp. 9-12.

[3] Herman L. Fritschel, "The Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the U.S.," Proceedings, the Twenty-fourth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, Milwaukee, June 19-21, 1940, p. 29.

A committee was elected in 1933 to work out in detail a two year curriculum for deaconess training and also a systematic plan for further studies.[4] Later, the same conference voted that a text-book in diaconics be prepared and published and that a committee be appointed to carry out this assignment.[5]

The 1940 conference adopted a resolution urging all motherhouses to send deaconesses on for further training in their fields, in the interest of their professional advancement. At the same time the demand for a common text-book in diaconics was renewed and the work assigned to a new writer.[1]

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[1] Proceedings and Papers of the Fourteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, Philadelphia, September 28-29, 1920, p. 11.

[2] Proceedings, the Sixteenth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, Milwaukee, May 20-22, 1924, p. 12.

[3] Proceedings and Papers, the Nineteenth Conference, Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, Columbus, Ohio, May 12-13, 1930, p. 11.

[4] Proceedings and Papers, the Twentieth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Institutions in America, Brooklyn, April 20-21, 1933, p. 7.

[5] Ibid.

In another area of concern, in 1920, a committee on deaconess garb was appointed on the request of one motherhouse for advice about modernizing the garb.[2] The committee reported in 1922 that it recognized the need for a garb that was not "unnecessarily conspicuous and churchy."[3] Moreover it was almost ready to propose a common garb for the deaconesses of all the Lutheran houses, but because it had received word that the sisters in the various motherhouses found their current garbs serviceable, it recommended that each motherhouse work out its own solutions with respect to the garb.[4]

In 1928 the conference voted that there be an exchange among the members of the conference of all items of publication that had to do with advancing the deaconess cause and further that some common publicity items useful to all be prepared; three drafts of such advertisements were expected to be circulated in the first year.[1] In 1940 a conference resolution called upon the motherhouses to be more energetic in getting out informative literature about themselves.[2]

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[1] Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America, Milwaukee, June 19-21, 1940, p. 12.

[2] Proceedings of the Fourteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Philadelphia, September 28-29, 1920, p. 10.

[3] Proceedings, the Fifteenth Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in the United States, Omaha, October 31 to November 2, 1922, p. 13.

[4] Ibid.

The conference resolved in 1948 to study how to proceed toward uniform admissions and education standards.[3] There proved to be too much diversity of practice among the motherhouses by that time to permit common standards to be proposed, but the committee that worked on the problem saw wisdom in working toward a common catalogue, through which the motherhouse schools might effect a division of labor among themselves in respect to deaconess education.[4]

The consequence of the foregoing evidences of unity is that the presumption in approaching the Lutheran motherhouses as they were in 1918 must be expressed, not in the question: against the background of so much diversity, what are the common elements, but rather in the question: against the background of so much similarity, were there any diversities in these motherhouses?

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[1] Proceedings and Papers, the Eighteenth Conference of Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses, Chicago, May 16-17, 1928, pp. 11, 15-16.

[2] Proceedings, Twenty-Fourth Conference, 1940, p. 12.

[3] Proceedings, the Twenty-Eighth Lutheran Deaconess Conference in America, Omaha, June 16-17, 1948, p. 18.

[4] Proceedings, Twenty-Ninth Conference, 1949, pp. 15-16.

It is therefore proposed, in connection with the immediately following review of the changes since 1918, outside the United Lutheran Church, in the conception of the Lutheran deaconess and of her proper work and education, to describe the 1918 situation in the case of each diaconate only insofar as it differed from the 1918 situation in the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church. That is, where no account of the 1918 point of departure is given, under any rubric, the assertion is being made that the description of the relevant United Lutheran Church practice at that point serves also as a description of the practice of the diaconate in question.

CHAPTER XIV

CHANGES IN OTHER LUTHERAN DIACONATES -- GROUP II

(I)

It is proposed now to begin the examination of the changes that have occurred in the conception of the deaconess and of her proper work and education among those Lutheran diaconates within which some developments of the deaconess idea have been permitted to occur.

The procedure will be to take up in turn the various categories of changes introduced in the discussion of the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church in America and in the case of each to review the relevant information regarding the four Lutheran diaconates of the second group. These diaconates will be considered in the order in which they were introduced in the preceding chapter.

I. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Lutheran Motherhouse, Milwaukee[1]

Besides concurring in the occasional recruitment efforts of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference, the Milwaukee motherhouse resumed publishing in 1930 *The Deaconess Annals*, a quarterly paper that had lapsed in 1910 as the *Annals of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses*. This house organ attained a circulation of fifteen thousand and drew praise in 1944 as an exemplary deaconess publicity medium.[1]

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[1] The sources of information about the Milwaukee motherhouse, in the period under study, that are cited several times are the following. (The abbreviation used in the footnotes is given immediately after each source.) (1) Deaconess Annals, a

It has also been regarded as part of the responsibility of the rector of the motherhouse to seek opportunities to make addresses in which he could appeal for recruits.[2] In recent years a vigorous public relations committee of the board of directors has been producing and circulating folders and

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quarterly publication of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse in Milwaukee, beginning with volume I, number 1, April, 1930. Abbreviation: *DA*. (2) Minutes of the Board of Managers of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses, June, 1918, to end: October, 1926, pp. 203-391, typescript. Abbreviation: Bd. of Mgrs., IPD. (3) Copy of the Minutes of the Corporation, Institution of Protestant Deaconesses, July, 1922, to end: November, 1929. Pages not numbered. Typescript. Abbreviation: Corp., IPD. (4) *Information for Prospective Deaconesses* (pamphlet). Milwaukee: Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, no date [not earlier than 1957], P. 12. Abbreviation: *Information.*

[1] Clarence E. Krumbholz, "Elements of a Good Interpretative Program for the Diaconate," *Proceedings*, Twenty-Sixth Conference of the Lutheran Deaconess Homes in America, Minneapolis, June 19-24, 1944, p. 30.

[2] Bd. of Mgrs., IPD, Pittsburgh, June 28, 1921, p. 268.

slide-films, advertizing in American Lutheran Church papers, offering speakers on deaconess work, and bringing church organizations to visit the motherhouse.[1]

Beginning in 1957, a bid has been made to interest women who have already completed their professional education.[2]

Deaconess Institute, Omaha[3]

As early as 1921 it was affirmed that recruitment was inadequate to keep up with the demand for personnel at the Immanuel Deaconess Institute. Students who did not wish to become deaconesses were nevertheless invited to apply for admission to the deaconess school,[4] and the first steps were taken to open a school of nursing.[1] The school was opened in 1922, and the first class of nurses graduated in 1925.[2] By June of 1944 the school of nursing had 355 graduates. The deaconess school by the same year had enrolled 179 students since 1887, of whom eighty-five had left and seventeen had died.[3]

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[1] DA, XXVI, 4 (October-December, 1955), p. 11.

[2] Information, p. 4.

[3] The sources of information about the Omaha motherhouse that are cited several times in the following account are given here, with the abbreviations used for them in the footnotes. (1) The Deaconess Banner, published bi-monthly by the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Omaha, Nebraska. Volume I, number 1, April, 1921, under the name Diakoniss-Baneret. Abbreviation: DB. (2) Minutes of the Annual Conventions of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church (before 1948, the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod in North America). Abbreviation: Minutes, Augustana. (3) Annual Reports of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, a bound volume beginning with the 20th Report, in Swedish, dated 1911, for the year 1910, and ending with the 45th, dated 1936, for the year 1935. Abbreviation: An. Report, IDI. (Annual Reports after 1936 appeared in The Deaconess Banner.)

[4] DB, I, 3 (October, 1921), p. 1.

The pages of the Deaconess Banner from 1921 until very recently were filled with appeals to young female readers to consider the diaconate as a possible calling for themselves, but exhortation alone was not the solution. The board of directors elected a committee in 1927 to consider what might be done to interest a larger number of women;[4] in 1928 the director reported that discussions were proceeding among all the deaconess institutions as to the possibility of recruiting more effectively through changing the courses of study and the deaconess rules.[5] One consequence of this concern was a questionnaire sent to 200 pastors and educators. The consensus of forty replies was reported to show interest in more changes than the board had yet contemplated; the board had evidently only considered improving the course preparation for parish work, but the respondents wanted a new deaconess garb and such other changes (not specified) as led the director to ask whether the diaconate might not, though small, serve the Lord better with the current standards.[1] (The standards referred to were not academic; the reference was to such qualities in deaconess candidates as a non-expectant, self-denying attitude, humility, submissiveness, and the like, without which it was thought impossible to have a diaconate.)

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[1] Ibid., p. 2. [2] DB, V, 2 (May, 1925), p. 4.

[3] DB, XXV, 2 (August, 1944), p. 4.

[4] Minutes, Augustana, Omaha, June 16-21, 1927, p. 39.

[5] An. Report, IDI, 1928, p. 8.

In 1936, for the first time, a deaconess (a former directing sister) was appointed field secretary for recruitment.[2]

The board of directors appointed another advisory committee, in 1942, to work on the problem of relating deaconess education more closely to the needs of the church.[3] The nature of the report and of the board's response indicate that the underlying concern was again for better recruitment.[4] The board adopted certain recommendations of the committee, to the effect that there again be a deaconess engaged in recruitment, that new propaganda leaflets be prepared and circulated, that the style of the garb and its obligatory constant use be reconsidered, that separate quarters be found for elderly deaconesses, and that there be a permanent advisory committee on deaconess affairs.[1]

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[1] An. Report, IDI, 1931, p. 10.

[2] Minutes, Augustana, St. Peter, Minn., June 11-16, 1936, p. 154.

[3] Minutes, Augustana, Jamestown, New York, June 9-14, 1942, p. 166.

[4] The report is given in DB, XXIV, 4 (December, 1943), pp. 3, 5-7.

It was, finally, the concern about ineffective recruitment that led the Augustana Church in 1954 to request "that a study of the diaconate in its relation to present day needs and conditions be initiated by the Executive Council."[2] The Augustana Church with a few modifications adopted the report,[3] and the effects of it will be observed below under the appropriate rubrics of the present study.

Deaconess Home and Hospital, Chicago[4]

As early as 1920, the board of trustees of the Deaconess

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[1] DB, XXIV, 6 (April, 1944), p. 1.

[2] Minutes, Augustana, Los Angeles, June 14-20, 1954, p. 207.

[3] Minutes, Augustana, Jamestown, New York, June 16-22, 1958, p. 300.

[4] The sources of information about the Chicago motherhouse and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in its relationship to the diaconate that are cited several times in the following account are given here with the abbreviations used for them in the footnotes. (1) The Deaconess News, Chicago, Illinois, from November, 1929, to date. Monthly and bi-monthly. No volume or issue numbers. Abbreviation: DN. (2) Reports of the General Conventions of the

Home and Hospital reported to the church that there were too few deaconesses to sustain its program.[1] The board was hoping to eke out the supply by opening a twelve months course for institutional workers.[2] In 1926 the board asked the church for permission to begin a school of nursing, because it was too difficult to secure sufficient deaconesses.[3] The church concurred, and the school of nursing was opened in 1926 with a first class of fourteen pupils.[4] However, the church urged better deaconess recruitment, through building an appropriate deaconess home (the deaconesses were scattered in several apartments) and changing the rules to make the diaconate more attractive.[5]

The requested rules appeared in 1927-1928.[6] The provisions that bore directly on the conception of the diaconate were

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Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (after 1947, the Evangelical Lutheran Church). Abbreviation: Reports, ELC. (3) Annual Reports of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, 1138 North Leavitt Street, Chicago. Abbreviation: An. Report, LDHH.

[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 10-17, 1920, p. 140.

[2] Ibid. [3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 2-9, 1926, p. 334.

[4] Official Reports to the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, 1926, p. 39.

[5] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 2-9, 1926, p. 345.

[6] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, pp. 16-17.

to the effect that the deaconess training course should be opened to deaconess and non-deaconess students alike, the students deciding as graduates whether they preferred to be deaconesses or not. Both deaconess and non-deaconess graduates were to be given the benefit of the motherhouse sickness-care and pension system and counseling and placement arrangements.

In 1932 the Deaconess Home asked the church for one Sunday, preferably Septuagesima Sunday, as a day for church-wide advertisement of and prayers for the deaconess work.[1] In 1953 the board called a young deaconess to the work of field secretary for recruitment.[2] Since this appointment lapsed no recruiting has been done, pending the organization of a unified diaconate in connection with the on-going merger of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church.

Finally it was concern about recruitment that led to a radical and continuing re-conception of deaconess work and deaconess education in the Evangelical Lutheran Church with the adoption of the report of the church's Commission on Diaconic Service in 1954.[3] It was on the request of the board of the Lutheran

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[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 1-8, 1932, p. 302.

[2] DN, May-July, 1953, p. 4.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, pp. 80, 487.

Deaconess Home and Hospital in 1946 that the general church convention elected a committee to consider whether responsibility for the direction and expansion of the diaconate should not be assumed as a major activity of the church itself.[1] At the following general convention in 1948 the committee recommended that the training of deaconesses and other women church workers have a fresh start and be conducted at a new location, separate from any one welfare or other institution of the church, and that a commission be organized to carry out this directive; the convention concurred.[2] The Commission on the Diaconate made its report in 1950, asking among other things for a permanent commission on the diaconate, subsidiary to the church's board of education. This commission, established by the church and renamed the Commission on Diaconic Service, on the premise that male lay church workers should not be excluded from its responsibility,[3] produced the report that, adopted by the general convention of the church, has been the major blueprint of a continuing reorganization of the diaconate of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.[4]

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[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 11-18, 1946, pp. 35, 451.

[2] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 8-13, 1948, pp. 42, 506.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 20-26, 1956, p. 139.

[4] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, p. 487.

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne[1]

A major responsibility of the office of the superintendent (now executive director) of the Lutheran Deaconess Association from the beginning was recruitment. He traveled, preached, gave illustrated lectures, and won members for the Association.[2] The quarterly news-letter, the Lutheran Deaconess, was authorized in 1923 to be another advertisement of the program.[3] The first of a new series of young, attractive deaconess field secretaries was appointed in 1946.[4]

In the years before 1943, there were no charges of any kind made to deaconess students, the Deaconess Association paying all costs.[5] With the development of the four year curriculum at Valparaiso University, scholarships were introduced in order to moderate the costs to the candidates. Valparaiso agreed to charge half tuition to deaconess students, and the Deaconess Association was offering scholarships of $175 per year to students in the first two years and $200 to upper-classmen in 1960.[1]

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[1] The sources of information about the Lutheran Deaconess Association that are cited several times in the following account are given here with the abbreviations used for them in the footnotes. (1) The Lutheran Deaconess, "official organ of the Lutheran Deaconess Association," a quarterly, volume I, number 1, January, 1924. Abbreviation: LD. (2) "History of the Lutheran Deaconess Association Within the Synodical Conference of North America," by H. B. Kohlmeier, Fort Wayne, 1944, a typed manuscript. P. 36. Abbreviation: Kohlmeier. (3) The Deaconess Quiz, 6th edition 1961 [1960], pamphlet, Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, P. 17. Abbreviation: Quiz.

[2] LD, VIII, 3 (July, 1931), pp. 5-6. [3] Kohlmeier, p. 31.

[4] LD, XXIV, 1 (January, 1947), p. 2.

[5] LD, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22; XII, 3 (July, 1935), p. 3.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Lutheran Motherhouse, Milwaukee

In 1934 the Milwaukee motherhouse announced that deaconess applicants ought to have completed a high school education.[2] This was not going so far as to reject applicants who had not completed high school; such students could still qualify as deaconess institutional workers. But it was the preference of the motherhouse to give professional nurse training to all deaconesses, and in the strong nursing school of the Milwaukee Hospital this presupposed in 1934 a high school diploma. A firm requirement of graduation from high school has been made of all candidates in more recent literature.[3]

The Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Omaha

In the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, the first effort to raise the academic admission requirements to include graduation from high school was made in 1924. The Institute opened a school of nursing in 1922, for which it sought state accreditation, and all deaconesses that were to take nurses' training had to be high school graduates.[1] However there was need for deaconess institutional workers who were not nurses and thus high school graduation was not required of deaconess candidates.[2] In 1929 it was announced that high school graduation or the equivalent would be required for admission, but the possibility was still held out that exceptions might be made.[3] There was an effort to secure college credit for the motherhouse schooling in 1946, and this led to a firm requirement that the candidates be high school graduates able to do college work and even to the recommendation that they complete two years of college before entering.[4]

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[1] Quiz, pp. 8-9. [2] DA, V, 3 (October, 1934), p. 2.

[3] Information, p. 4.

Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital, Chicago

An accredited school of nursing was established by the Deaconess Hospital in 1926,[5] bringing with it the requirement of high school graduation of those deaconesses who would be admitted to it. In 1930, when an elaborate new curriculum was offered and accreditation for social work education was being sought, all deaconess candidates were required to be high school graduates or the equivalent.[1] Finally, the adoption of the report of the Commission on Diaconic Service in 1954 established the admission requirement of a college degree "or the equivalent."[2]

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[1] DB, IV, 2 (April, 1924), p. 5.

[2] DB, IV, 1 (February, 1924), p. 5.

[3] DB, IX, 1 (June, 1929), p. 7.

[4] DB, XXVII, 1 (June, 1946), p. 3.

[5] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, p. 39.

The Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The Fort Wayne motherhouse began in 1921 by attaching itself to the already existent school of nursing of the Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne. Evidently because it thus had to conform to the admission practice of the school of nursing, it announced that all candidates were to work toward the status of registered nurses and were required to have completed at least one year of high school.[3]

In 1935 the Lutheran Deaconess Association began a different tack. It was announced that thereafter candidates would have to complete their vocational or professional training as nurses, social service workers, or teachers before entering the deaconess school.[4] Several reasons were offered. One was that the deaconess courses had tended to be neglected by the students, who had had to keep up, at the same time, with classmates in the nursing courses. It had also been found difficult for the students to work in practical deaconess training under the circumstances. The association further confessed that too many deaconess candidates as nursing students had tended to form romantic attachments.[1] Nothing was published about the abrogation of this requirement, but it was not maintained in the face of a falling enrollment.

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[1] DN, April, 1930, p. 3.

[2] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, pp. 80, 487.

[3] LD, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22. [2] Kohlmeier, p. 27.

When the one year theoretical deaconess course was lengthened to three semesters in 1941, to include college courses in psychology and sociology,[2] the admission requirement was declared to include graduation from high school and ability to do college work.[3] A little later it was announced that the age requirement for admission was lowered from nineteen years to the age of graduation from high school.[4]

Finally, when the four year deaconess curriculum at Valparaiso University was developed, the admission requirements became those of the university, with the added provision of a battery of six tests,[5] chiefly vocational and personality inventories, designed for selecting wholesome candidates and as a basis for later counseling.

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[1] LD, XII, 4 (October, 1935), p. 2.

[2] LD, XX, 1 (January, 1943), p. 4.

[3] LD, XIX, 4 (October, 1942), p. 6.

[4] LD, XXII, 1 (January, 1945), p. 2. [5] Quiz, p. 4.

III. INVESTITURE AND PROBATION

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The term "probationer" has been replaced by the terms "deaconess student" and "candidate" in the period since 1918,[1] but the practice of investing the student after the first school year has been retained.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

Investiture and probation were affected by the sweeping change ordered by the church beginning in 1950. The terms "probation" and "probationer" were dropped, and the investiture of the deaconess in her uniform was attached to the rite of consecration.[2]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

With the movement to the Valparaiso campus, the concepts of investiture and probation disappeared. The young woman was referred to as a deaconess student from the time of her admission, and she was invested with her uniform and insignia (the deaconess cross and sleeve emblem) at the time of her consecration.[3]

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[1] DB, XXII, 3 (April, 1953), p. 5.

[2] Report, ELC, 1954, p. 487, #6. [3] Quiz, p. 11.

IV. CONSECRATION

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

When the course had been lengthened to as much as five years, including two years of deaconess study and three years of nursing, the service of consecration was no longer postponed beyond the time of the completion of formal studies.[1]

A more important change was that of bringing the service of consecration to the synodical convention and of securing church authorization that the consecration might be performed annually by the president of the church.[2] The intention of the board of the deaconess institute in asking for this was to cause the church to realize more fully the vital place of the diaconate in its life and work.[3]

Deaconess Home, Chicago

Under the reorganization ordered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church beginning in 1950, the consecration was required to be performed by the president of the church or his designee.[4]

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[1] DB, XXI, 6 (April, 1942), p. 18.

[2] Minutes, Augustana, Kansas City, Missouri, June 10-15, 1947, p. 215.

[3] Ibid., p. 202.

[4] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 21-27, 1950, p. 53.

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

With the abandonment of the motherhouse in 1943, it was no longer feasible to conduct the consecrations in Fort Wayne. The present executive director developed the custom of having the service of consecration in the deaconess' home church, in order that the deaconess work might thus come to be celebrated in the presence of a new and receptive audience.[1] The consecration has been performed in recent years within a few weeks after the deaconess' graduation from college, by the authority of the board of directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, which has awarded her a diploma at the time to attest her standing as a recognized graduate deaconess and professional church worker.[2]

V. RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEACONESS TO THE CHURCH

To the present moment there has not been the slightest suggestion of departure from the universal Lutheran idea that only the ministry of the Word of God is a divinely ordered office in the church and that all other offices are auxiliary and expendable. The meaning of consecration in relation to ordination has not even been discussed.

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[1] Reported in conversation, September 5, 1960.

[2] *Quiz*, p. 11; *LD*, XXXVII, 3 (July, 1960), p. 8.

VI. VOWS

No change has occurred in respect to the universal Lutheran protestation that no vows are required of deaconesses. However it has been noticed and complained about in connection with all the diaconates that the deaconess has generally been held in tight reins by the expectations of those about her. The expectations in connection with marriage are a case in point.

Lutheran Motherhouse, Milwaukee

There has thus far appeared at Milwaukee only a suggestion in an unpublished memorandum circulated for discussion by the directing sister that marriage need not always be regarded as an item that disqualifies a deaconess.[1]

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

At least one director of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute asserted that the view of marriage that obtained in deaconess circles was not scriptural and argued that the office of a deacon or deaconess was no more revoked by the fact of marriage than the office of preaching the Word was.[2] In 1958 the Augustana Church endorsed this view and adopted the judgment that

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[1] Read in Milwaukee, August 31, 1960.

[2] DB, XXVIII, 4 (December, 1948), p. 8.

"deaconesses who marry be privileged to continue as members and in the service of the Diaconate."[1]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The marriage of deaconesses seems to have been accepted with calmness throughout the history of this diaconate, although the woman was understood to have left the diaconate upon marrying. Weddings of deaconesses were reported, always with an expression of good wishes, and letters with news and greetings from married former deaconesses were frequently quoted, throughout the volumes of the Lutheran Deaconess. In 1937, of six deaconesses who married, five were reported as married to pastors or missionaries and thus not lost to the service.[2]

The change in this diaconate has been to accept marriage as not in itself terminating the deaconess career. As long as she works full-time for the church, the woman remains a deaconess in good standing.[3]

VOWS -- OBEDIENCE

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The strong emphasis on the duty of "willing obedience" that was characteristic of Kaiserswerth and was still prominent in the first half of the period studied in statements from the Deaconess Institute[1] tended to disappear entirely in the remainder of the period. Substantially the same thing can be said about the other diaconates.

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[1] Minutes, Augustana, 1958, pp. 286-87.

[2] LD, XV, 1 (January, 1938), pp. 4-5.

[3] Reported by Executive Director Arnold F. Krentz in conversation, September 5, 1960.

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

In this diaconate the deaconess agrees "to abide by the assignment of initial position made by the Committee on Placement . . ."[2] Formerly (1935 and earlier) she agreed to accept succeeding assignments as well; but then as now the institution was on record as having promised to take into consideration the abilities and inclinations of the deaconess.

VII. REMUNERATION

Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee

As to a change of policy from the allowance system at Milwaukee, there is only a hint in a pamphlet published by the motherhouse that salaries for deaconesses need not be excluded on principle.[3]

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[1] *Vide* "Deaconess Principles," in *DB*, XVII, 6 (April, 1938), pp. 1-3.

[2] *Quiz*, p. 11.

[3] *Last Frontier -- Or New Advance?* p. 6.

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The major change in respect to remuneration of deaconesses has been the introduction of the salary system. The Augustana Church voted in 1958, as part of the comprehensive new plan for the diaconate adopted in that year, that all future deaconesses would have to be on salary and that all present deaconesses would be permitted to be.[1] It was reported in 1960 that approximately half the active deaconesses had transferred to the salary plan.[2]

Minor changes in the remuneration picture were as follows: the monthly allowance of the deaconesses had been raised somewhat from time to time until it reached thirty dollars per month in 1946,[3] and fifty dollars per month about ten years later.[4] In the same year it was made explicit that a deaconess was free to retire at age sixty-five.[5] In 1951 the old sabbatical leave, four months after ten years,[6] was replaced by a more generous four months and a small bonus in the seventh year of service.[7]

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[1] Vide footnote 1, p. 279.

[2] Letter from Sister Dora Gulbranson, December 28, 1960.

[3] DB, XXVII, 1 (June, 1946), p. 2.

[4] Letter from Sister Dora Gulbranson, December 28, 1960.

[5] Ibid. [6] DB, IV, 1 (February, 1924), p. 5.

[7] Minutes, Augustana, Galesburg, Illinois, June 12-17, 1951, p. 259.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

There were several minor changes of remuneration in earlier years, on one occasion increasing the allowance and on another enrolling the deaconesses in the church pension fund.[1] The major change in this matter came in 1954, when as a result of the recommendations of the Commission on Diaconic Service the deaconesses were required to be paid salaries by the agencies they were serving.[2]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The chief change here was the institution of the salary plan for all deaconesses in 1943, when the motherhouse was given up. The allowance, when it was in effect, was more generous than in some diaconates; it was thirty dollars per month in 1925,[3] thirty-five dollars per month in 1935.[4] This was, of course, in addition to full maintenance (including three uniforms per year), free medical care, and the assurance of retirement care at the motherhouse, which were standard in diaconates.

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[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June, 1942, p. 141.

[2] You Asked (recruitment pamphlet), Minneapolis, Diaconate Office, Department of Christian Education, Evangelical Lutheran Church, p. 5.

[3] LD, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22.

[4] LD, XII, 3 (July, 1935), p. 3.

With the closing of the motherhouse, all deaconesses went on salaries paid by their current employers.[1] The salary range in 1960 was reported to be from $3000 to $4600 per year.[2]

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[1] LD, XXIII, 4 (October, 1946), p. 4. [2] Quiz, p. 12.

CHAPTER XV

CHANGES IN OTHER LUTHERAN DIACONATES -- GROUP II

(II)

The account of the changes since 1918 in the Lutheran diaconates that have tried to remain viable continues with a consideration of the deaconess garb and title.

I. GARB OR UNIFORM, AND TITLE

Lutheran Motherhouse, Milwaukee

Like other motherhouses, the Milwaukee institution found it necessary to modernize the garb, but there has been no resolution to make the garb optional.[1] There has been an admission that the garb was expendable.[2]

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

There have been a number of changes in the style of the garb authorized by the board of directors since 1918. More recently there has been some liberalization of the obligation of wearing the garb, along with another modernization of the style.[3] The major change has waited for the Augustana Church's action of

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[1] DA, XXVII, 4 (October-December, 1956), pp. 2-3.

[2] *Vide* n. 3, p. 280. [3] DB, XXVII, 5 (February, 1948), p.3.

1958, according to which the individual deaconess has full freedom to decide if and when she will wear the garb.[1]

Closely related to the garb is the traditional title "Sister." A vote at the seventh biennial deaconess conference of the Augustana sisterhood indicated that the deaconesses preferred the title "Deaconess" to the title "Sister,"[2] but the latter still seems to be used regularly in the pages of the Deaconess Banner.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

The Evangelical Lutheran Church itself called for one revision of the garb style, in 1919, as well as for some freedom for the deaconess to lay it aside for civilian clothing.[3] The moderate new rules of 1927-28 declared about the garb only that it had to be worn on duty.[4] This principle was reiterated in the church action of 1950.[5]

A garb change adopted in 1946 produced a simple, conventional black street dress with narrow white cuffs and a white collar. The bonnet was no longer trimmed with a white bow at the chin.[1] The older deaconesses have been free to retain this style, but the deaconesses admitted since the church's new plan of 1954 went into effect have worn as a uniform a navy blue tailored suit with a deaconess cross on the left lapel.[2]

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[1] Vide footnote 1, p. 279.

[2] DB, XXXVII, 5 (October, 1958), p. 5.

[3] An. Report, LDHH, 1919-20, pp. 21-22.

[4] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, pp. 16-17.

[5] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 21-27, 1953, p. 53.

In 1927-28 an attempt was made to limit the title "Sister" to the consecrated deaconesses.[3] The tendency since 1954 has been to refer to the deaconesses, not as "Sister Mary," but as "Deaconess Mary Smith" or "Deaconess Smith."[4]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The big change in the garb came with the move of the student deaconesses to the Valparaiso campus in 1943. The executive director determined that the association would have a uniform that the young deaconesses would want to wear.[5] The result was a two piece navy blue suit with a gold cross emblem embroidered on the left sleeve and a gold cross on the lapel.[1] Furthermore, the uniform is worn as regularly or seldom as the deaconess, and perhaps also her employer, see fit.[2]

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[1] DN, July-August, 1946, p. 1.

[2] You Asked (recruitment pamphlet), ELC, p. 5.

[3] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, pp. 16-17.

[4] Minutes of the Commission on Diaconic Service, July 28, 1960, passim.

[5] Arnold F. Krentz, in conversation, September 5, 1960.

The title "Sister" was never as well established in the practice of the Lutheran Deaconess Association as in some other diaconates and is now rarely encountered. In current practice the deaconess is likely to be addressed as "Miss Smith" or as "Mary."[3] In the third person, she is frequently "Deaconess Mary Smith," "Deaconess Smith," or sometimes "Deaconess Mary."[4]

II. SEPARATION

Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee

The Milwaukee motherhouse developed a distinctive practice with regard to separation. The woman who leaves the diaconate takes with her the retirement funds that have been accumulated to her credit from the time of her entrance upon her first work assignment.[5]

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[1] Quiz, p. 12.

[2] "Guidelines for Those Employing Deaconesses," Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, (mimeographed), p. 1.

[3] "Deaconess Ethics," Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, (mimeographed), p. 1.

[4] LD, passim. [5] Information, p. 10.

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The only notice of any attention to the matter of separation since 1918 at Omaha has been the publication of a rule to the effect that a probationer give the motherhouse one month of notice of withdrawal and a consecrated deaconess three months.[1]

Deaconess Home, Chicago

A rule was reported in the Annual Report of 1927-28 to the effect that a deaconess student who did not enter deaconess service or entered but did not remain for three years would be obliged to pay the tuition charges that had been waived because she was a prospective deaconess.[2] The same rule was re-enacted in 1942.[3]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The major innovation in this connection at Fort Wayne is the agreement signed by the deaconess students who receive scholarships. The student promises that if she withdraws before being consecrated, she will repay whatever she has accepted as a scholarship. If she works one year, she is obliged to repay two thirds of the scholarship; if she works two years, she is obliged to repay one third; and if she works three years, she has no obligation to repay.[1]

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[1] DB, XXVII, 1 (June, 1946), p. 2. [2] Pp. 16-17.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapplis, June, 1942, p. 141.

III. THE ROLE OF THE MOTHERHOUSE

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The motherhouse has functioned in the traditional way throughout the period from 1918 to 1959 at Omaha, with two exceptions. One was the provision of a limited term of office for the directing sister. Nominated by a two thirds vote of the sisters, the directing sister has been elected by the board of directors since 1954 for a four year term and is eligible to be reelected once.[2]

The other change was the disappearance of the concept of the rector-pastor with the coming of the first non-clerical executive director of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in 1957.[3]

A major change is developing out of the Augustana Church action of 1959, which ordered that the "motherhouse system be continued only for those now members of the Augustana Diaconate and those now in deaconess training."[4] This resolution was not adopted by the church when first presented in 1958, but was referred for further study.[1] The sisterhood and the deaconess council expressed their misgivings, feeling that the preservation of the sisterhood demanded some kind of fellowship center, just as the continuance of deaconess education required a deaconess schoolhouse.[2] The church, however, affirmed the end of the motherhouse system as far as future deaconesses were concerned. It is still being worked out by the deaconesses and the Immanuel Deaconess Institute board what form the fellowship center is to take. It has been projected to assign the center responsibility for deaconess orientation, some deaconess education, retreats, counseling of deaconesses, and placement services.[3]

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[1] Quiz, p. 9.

[2] Minutes, Augustana, Los Angeles, June 14-20, 1954, p. 210.

[3] DB, XXXVI, 4 (August, 1957), p. 1.

[4] Minutes, Augustana, 1958, pp. 286-87, #12B.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

The motherhouse community in Chicago organized itself as a local congregation in 1926, after securing permission in advance from the Council of the Norwegian Lutheran Church.[1]

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[1] Minutes, Augustana, Jamestown, New York, June 16-22, 1958, p. 300.

[2] Unpublished, untitled memorandum of comment on items 12A and 12E of the report. It is interesting to note that the deaconess conference and the deaconess council were described in this memorandum as feeling that the changes ordered by the church in 1958 were for the most part such as the deaconesses themselves had been discussing. P. 2.

[3] "Draft Outline of Possible Program and Organization for the Diaconate," Omaha, 1960, P. 8.

In 1935 a layman was appointed administrator of the hospital; thereafter the motherhouse pastor ceased to be rector and was instead chaplain of the hospital and pastor of the Elim Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Deaconess Home and Hospital.[2]

In other respects the classical motherhouse pattern remained unchanged until the General Convention action of 1950,[3] which practically eliminated the traditional motherhouse. It did so by taking the deaconess training school physically from Chicago to the Twin Cities, by taking the administration of deaconess education from the motherhouse and vesting it in the Commission on Diaconic Service, and finally by making the commission responsible for a "fellowship organization" for deaconesses. With the deaconesses on salaries and enrolled in the church pension plan, the motherhouse ceased almost entirely to have any functions to perform and thus far ceased in effect to exist. The building that housed it is simply a residence for deaconesses and nurses on duty and nurses in training at the hospital. The congregation has remained.

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[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 2-9, 1926, p. 335.

[2] An. Report, LDHH, 1935-36, pp. 5, 33.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 21-27, 1950, pp. 52-53.

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

In the judgment of the executive director of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, the most important single act in the renovation of its diaconate was the getting rid of the motherhouse.[1] The term "motherhouse" and the ideas associated with it have disappeared, but a number of the motherhouse functions are continued in Deaconess Hall on the Valparaiso University campus. Newly built and dedicated in 1958, the hall includes dormitory rooms for two and four girls, a refectory and kitchen, lounges, a library, a laundry, and a chapel. The style is impressively modern. Daily devotions in the chapel express and support the students' collective worship-life. The hall is not a school, for the students receive almost all their instruction in the class-rooms of the university, but it is their common home while at school. Like the motherhouse, it provides a structure within which strong bonds of fellowship and a kind of sisterhood can emerge.[2] There is no longer the resident housefather (the superintendent or rector), but something like the directing sister remains in the office of the house director, an older deaconess who is in charge of the hall and a counselor to the deaconess students.[1]

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[1] Reported in conversation by Arnold F. Krentz, September 5, 1960.

[2] _Quiz_, pp. 16-17.

Two functions of the motherhouse have been provided for in other ways. To make up for the motherhouse as a retirement home, the deaconesses of the Lutheran Deaconess Association have been encouraged to enter the social security system and the contributory pension plan of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod.[2] Placement services and an amount of protection of the deaconess in her field of labor are provided by the placement committee of the board of directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Association and by the executive director.[3]

The deaconess student is consulted about her work preferences before she is given her first work assignment by the placement committee.[4] After her first placement, which is for one year, the deaconess may take the initiative in discussing a change with the executive director of the deaconess association, who assists her in developing another placement.[5]

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[1] "The Handbook for Deaconess Students," Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, 1958-59, (mimeographed), pp. 5-9.

[2] Quiz, p. 12. [3] Ibid., p. 10.

[4] LD, XXXII, 4 (October, 1955), p. 8; Quiz, p. 10.

[5] "Deaconess Ethics," p. 2; "Guidelines for Deaconesses," Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, (mimeographed), p. 2.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE SISTERHOOD

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

The sisterhood of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute began the era under study in a characteristically authoritarian motherhouse, in which the sisters' council was appointed, not elected, and met only on the call of the superintendent.[1] At present the deaconess council is elected by the deaconesses and meets monthly.[2]

Some cultivation of camaraderie among the whole sisterhood has been assured from time to time since 1930[3] by the (now) biennial Augustana Deaconess Conference.[4] Attendance is obligatory for all deaconesses, and the two-day session is devoted to Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and such business as the election of the deaconess council. Further experimentation in group living is being proposed for the deaconess fellowship center that is expected to take the place of the motherhouse.

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[1] Constitution of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Article 7, quoted in An. Report, IDI, 1922, p. 33.

[2] Constitution and By-Laws of the Diaconate of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, Article 6, revision of 1960.

[3] DB, X, 5 (December, 1930), pp. 2-3.

[4] DB, XXIX, 7 (October, 1950), pp. 7-8.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

A sense of sisterhood remains among the Chicago deaconesses, even though they have lost their motherhouse.[1] However they also feel the need of some means such as retreats to express and support the sisterhood.[2]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

A provision for the continuing fellowship of all deaconesses of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, the Deaconess Conference, was inaugurated in 1934. Resolving to meet annually in the summer, the conference asserted that its purpose was "to discuss matters of interest to deaconess work, to keep alive and deepen the spirit of consecration, and to strengthen the bond of sisterly love among the deaconesses."[3] One of its first acts was to ask for the creation of an advisory committee of five deaconesses through whom it could present items, through the superintendent, to the board of directors, indicating an additional interest on the part of the conference in furthering democratic process within the Lutheran Deaconess Association. The board granted the request.[4] The conference continues to meet annually for three days.[1]

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[1] Minutes of the Commission on Diaconic Service, July 28, 1960, pp. 1, 4.

[2] *Ibid*. [3] *LD*, II, 3 (July, 1934), p. 2.

[4] *LD*, XI, 1 (January, 1934), p. 5.

Living, studying, and working together in the same dormitory for as much as four years, the deaconesses of one generation have an opportunity to develop strong ties of friendship, not to say sisterhood. This is symbolized in their organization on the campus as Pi Delta Chi (standing for *Pistis kai Diakonia en Christo* = Faith and Service in Christ, the deaconesses' motto). Saying that it is not a sorority in the conventional sense, the group meets weekly during the school year and works "to build an *esprit de corps*. . ."[2]

V. THE ROLE OF THE DIACONATE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH, ITS GOVERNMENT AND MEANS OF SUPPORT

Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee

A certain amount of development occurred relative to the church-relatedness of the Milwaukee motherhouse. The Passavant-founded Institution of Protestant Deaconesses was not related in an official way to any church body in 1918. The sisters had been organized as a local congregation in 1910, but they were still what Lutherans call a "non-synodical" (independent) congregation in 1918.[3]

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[1] *LD*, XXXV, 3 (July, 1958), p. 8. [2] *Quiz*, p. 8.

[3] Herman L. Fritschel, *One Hundred Years of Deaconess Service* (Milwaukee: Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, 1949), p. 79.

The Institution of Protestant Deaconesses was a private corporation the members of which were the consecrated deaconesses of the institution and the pastors and laymen who constituted the board of managers.[1] The board characterized the institution's situation by adopting a resolution in 1921 that "it is the sense of this Board that the work of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses is intersynodical work."[2]

A charter revision in 1922 provided for local boards of management for all the institutions controlled by the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses.[3] When the various institutions began to pass into the control of their local boards in 1927, and the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses was permitted to become dormant, the Milwaukee motherhouse and hospital became a separate corporation,[4] with the understanding that it would seek to develop ties with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States (founded in 1854) and the other Lutheran groups with which the Iowa Synod was discussing merger.[5] The deaconess congregation voted to join the Iowa Synod as a local congregation,[1] and the Iowa Synod for its part acknowledged the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse at Milwaukee for the first time in 1930 as "affiliated with the Iowa Synod."[2]

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[1] Constitution of the Institution of Protestant Deaconesses, Article 3, in Corp., IPD, [no pagination of MS].

[2] Bd. of Mgrs., IPD, Pittsburgh, October 7, 1921, pp. 289-90.

[3] Bd. of Mgrs., IPD, Pittsburgh, May 8, 1922, p. 302.

[4] Corp., IPD, Pittsburgh, January 12, 1928.

[5] Corp., IPD, Pittsburgh, July 1, 1927.

When the anticipated merger of the Iowa Synod into the American Lutheran Church took place in 1930, the new church went further than the Iowa Synod had gone and voted "to recognize the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the Deaconess Motherhouse of the American Lutheran Church."[3] The degree of church-relatedness achieved was that which had obtained between the Philadelphia motherhouse and the General Council in 1918.

Nothing has happened since to change this relationship. The Milwaukee motherhouse has remained self-supporting and self-governing, although the American Lutheran Church and its Women's Missionary Federation contributed capital funds toward the construction of the new motherhouse building, dedicated in 1957.[4]

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[1] Corp., IPD, October 4, 1927, Milwaukee.

[2] Wartburg Almanac, Dubuque, Iowa, 1930, p. 111.

[3] Minutes of the First Convention of the America Lutheran Church, August 10-11, 1930, p. 34.

[4] The Dedication (pamphlet), Milwaukee: Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse, April 28, 1957, p. 11.

Its status is the same in the new American Lutheran Church that has united the present American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, beginning January 1, 1961. The sisters continue to constitute, with the board of managers, the corporation of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse. The board members are pastors and laymen of the American Lutheran Church, who are nominated by the board and elected by the deaconesses.[1]

This style of organization made it possible for real control of the motherhouse to pass into the hands of the deaconesses, as the climate of opinion ceased to preclude it, to a degree unparalleled in any other Lutheran diaconate. In 1918 one deaconess, the directing sister, was a member of the board of managers of the Institute of Protestant Deaconesses. In 1957 the deaconesses occupied four places out of twelve in the board of directors and in the executive committee of the board four places out of five. The chairman of the board was (and is) the directing sister.[2]

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

As indicated above, the Immanuel Deaconess Institute has been owned by the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church since 1904. Considering gifts and legacies as well as fees, the complex of institutions at Immanuel has been largely self-supporting as to current expenses, in relation to the church. The church support has been given through campaigns for capital funds and annual grants that have been roughly a little larger than the operating costs of the deaconess home and school, which have had no other source of regular income.[1] No formal change has occurred in this relationship. The sense of church responsibility for the diaconate is visible in the actions of the church in 1958 and 1959 that ordered the reorganization of the diaconate.

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[1] Articles of Organization of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse at Milwaukee, Article 4, Corp., IPD, Pittsburgh, July 1, 1927.

[2] DA, XXVIII, 4 (October-December, 1957), p. 13.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

The Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital of Chicago began the era as the one deaconess institution owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1923 the General Convention of the church acted to turn the Deaconess Home and Hospital over to a local board of trustees, organized as an Illinois corporation. This was done to avoid liability to taxation, since the church was not itself a charitable institution under the law, but the action did not dissociate the motherhouse and hospital from the church.[2]

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[1] E. g., 1946, when the church grant was of $24,903. Minutes, Augustana, Duluth, June 11-16, 1946, p. 186.

[2] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 15-21, 1922, pp. 267-72.

This arrangement was changed again in 1930 so that the delegates to the General Convention of the church became the corporation of the home and hospital and elected the board.[1] The sense of responsibility for the diaconate in the church is evident in the series of actions of the General Convention looking to the reorganization of the diaconate.

Besides the contributions of members of the church to the support of the deaconess home and hospital, the Evangelical Lutheran Church itself has contributed steadily. In 1920 it budgeted an annual contribution toward the charity work of the hospital and toward the deaconesses' inner mission work: the day nursery, kindergarten, and direct relief.[2] By 1941 these contributions had evolved into the payments to both the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Chicago and the Deaconess Hospital in Brooklyn of sums somewhat less than their outlays for chaplaincy services.[3]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The Lutheran Deaconess Association is an independent membership organization that describes itself as "within the Evangelical

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[1] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, May 21-28, 1930, pp. 420-21.

[2] Report, ELC, June 10-17, 1920, p. 202.

[3] Annual Reports of District Conventions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1941, p. 124.

Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America."[1] That is, the members are and must be communicant members of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod or of one of the smaller synods affiliated with the Missouri Synod in the Synodical Conference.[2] But the association is entirely separate from the church's own organization, and this is the way it has been from the beginning.[3] The association elects a board of directors, which establishes policy. The executive group of the board meets monthly to take up administrative questions.[4] The board has recently appointed an advisory council made up chiefly of executives of the various boards and departments of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, for the purpose of relating deaconess work and education to the whole range of the church's work.[5]

The organized church at large has never contributed to the current expense budget of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, but a number of local congregations have put the association into their budgets for amounts ranging from tens to hundreds of dollars. In addition, the Lutheran Deaconess Association collects dues of two dollars per year from its members and solicits gifts and legacies.[1]

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[1] LD, masthead, I, 1 (January, 1924). [2] Quiz, p. 1.

[3] Kohlmeier, passim.

[4] Arnold F. Krentz, in conversation, September 5, 1960.

[5] Ibid.

There has begun recently a gradual development of relatedness between the Lutheran Deaconess Association and the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. In 1949 the board of directors of the church appointed a committee to study the deaconess work and to look for ways in which the church and the diaconate could be mutually helpful.[2] When Deaconess Hall on the Valparaiso campus was being planned, the church allocated to it a portion of the funds it was then raising in a "Building For Christ" campaign; the awarded amount to two hundred twenty-five thousand dollars.[3] The following year the College of Presidents (of subsidiary districts) of the church undertook to review annually and confirm or change the first placements of deaconesses, as it had been doing for pastors and parish school teachers.[4] This has been received by the Lutheran Deaconess Association as a gain in prestige for the deaconesses.[5] The church also voted to open its coeducational Concordia (junior) colleges to deaconess students, thus providing low-cost local education to many more candidates.[1]

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[1] Quiz, p. 3. [2] LD, XXVI, 1 (January, 1949), p. 2.

[3] LD, XXXV, 2 (April, 1958), p. 8.

[4] LD, XXXVI, 4 (October, 1959), p. 6.

[5] Report of the Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Deaconess Association, 1959, p. 3. Fort Wayne (mimeographed). November 8, 1959.

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 4.

CHAPTER XVI

CHANGES IN OTHER LUTHERAN DIACONATES -- GROUP II

(III)

The account of the changes since 1918 in the Lutheran diaconates that have been trying to meet the requirements of a new age is continued now with a review of the work performed by the deaconesses.

I. WORK DONE BY DEACONESSES

Lutheran Motherhouse, Milwaukee

The work performed by the Milwaukee deaconesses has remained very largely institutional health and welfare work. As vocational specialties in such work have developed, deaconesses have entered them. Thus in 1957 the motherhouse was offering to prepare candidates for nursing or practical nursing, as hospital laboratory technicians, x-ray technicians, dieticians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, or administrative and office workers.[1] A communion wafer bakery, opened in 1934,[2] was still being operated. In addition, prospects for the diaconate were told that deaconesses could serve as parish workers, social workers, and teachers.[3]

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[1] Information, p. 8. [2] DA, V, 2 (July, 1934), p. 8.

[3] Information, p. 8.

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

At the start of the era being studied the Augustana deaconesses, like the deaconesses of the Philadelphia motherhouse, were doing both parish work and institutional work, chiefly the latter. Among the Immanuel sisters, not only did institutional work greatly predominate, but, with the possible exception of the missionary work in China, it was done in welfare institutions: hospitals, homes for aged persons and otherwise unprovided-for children, a home for invalids, and a hospice. This was consistent with the founder's aim to establish an "association for works of mercy."[1]

This pattern of distribution of deaconess efforts changed little through the years, although an advisory committee pointed out in 1943 that deaconess service ought to be spread more widely throughout the territory of the church, so that more church members might be acquainted with and interested in it, and that therefore more deaconesses ought to be in parish work.[2]

Within the pattern as described, the deaconesses continually met higher standards of preparedness for the positions they held and also branched out into some new fields. An example of the latter was the fact that a department of occupational therapy for the handicapped and aged on the Immanuel campus was opened in the charge of a deaconess in 1929.[1] A few years later, in 1932, the institute opened a department of "paramentics" where deaconesses (and later some of the patients in occupational thereapy) made articles for church use, such as communion wafers, clerical collars, and silk and linen hangings (paraments) for altars.[2]

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[1] Sec. entitled, "Other Lutheran Diaconates -- Group II."

[2] DB, XXIV, 4 (December, 1943), pp. 6-7.

The Immanuel Deaconess Institute announced in 1930 that deaconesses were in charge of all departments.[3] This implied, in a hospital accredited by the American College of Surgeons,[4] that the deaconesses were able to meet the new, higher standards that were coming into effect for the various teaching and supervisory positions in accredited hospitals. A parallel example can be offered from the social work of the Immanuel deaconesses. The Immanuel Deaconess Institute had opened a home for orphans in 1901, and in the early years the care was largely custodial. As social work standards changed, and foster homes replaced institutional care, the institute not only closed its children's home, but saw to it that the deaconesses in charge of its child welfare and child placement work were accredited social workers.[1]

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[1] DB, VIII, 6 (March, 1929), p. 1.

[2] DB, XI, 6 (April, 1932), pp. 7-8.

[3] Minutes, Augustana, Rock Island, Illinois, June 6-11, 1930, p. 160.

[4] DB, IV, 1 (February, 1924), p. 4.

A pamphlet published in 1957 indicated that Immanuel deaconesses were qualifying for such additional positions as x-ray and laboratory technicians, hospital dietitians, and teachers in parish schools and in the deaconess school.[2]

Deaconess Home, Chicago

The distinctive aspect of the labors of the Chicago deaconesses is their relatively large investment of strength in foreign missions. Out of a total active force of forty-five sisters in 1928, there were eleven in China and six in Madagascar,[3] more deaconesses overseas than in the home hospital. However as their total numbers declined, deaconesses had to be withdrawn from the remoter fields of labor.

After the deaconesses at work in foreign missions and in the Chicago hospital, the largest group was in institutional and other social work.[4] A typical enterprise was the deaconesses' own city mission, at which they operated a day nursery and kindergarten for working mothers, conducted a girls' sewing class, a mothers' meeting, manual training for boys, a Sunday School, and a weekday Bible class. In addition, they functioned as visiting nurses and distributed food and clothing.[1]

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[1] DB, XXIX, 2 (August, 1949), p. 5.

[2] Presenting Your Diaconate (recruitment pamphlet), Omaha: Immanuel Deaconess Institute, [1957], pp. 4-5.

[3] Proceedings and Papers, Eighteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Chicago, May 16-17, 1928, p. 9.

[4] An. Report, LDHH, 1935-36, p. 21.

Only a few sisters entered parish work. However the report of the first commission on the diaconate of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1950 urged that deaconesses be trained in each of the following fields: nursing, social welfare, missions, Christian education, parish work, and administration and service in church health and welfare institutions, as well as for any other areas in which the church needed personnel.[2] The field of church music was added in 1954.[3]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

The Fort Wayne motherhouse began in conventional hospital-based style; all candidates were expected to become nursing deaconesses.[4] A report published by the Lutheran Deaconess Conference in 1928 presents the fullest picture of the diversity of the work performed by the Fort Wayne deaconesses in the earlier period. The graduates were serving in three church hospitals, one church tuberculosis sanatorium, a church home for retarded children, two church homes for orphans, a city mission, an "industrial school," an "Italian mission," a hospice, two missions to American Indians, a mission in India, and two parishes.[1] In 1930 most but not all the preceding were mentioned, and deaconesses were also serving in a convalescent home and several homes for aged persons.[2]

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[1] *An. Report*, LDHH, 1924, pp. 38-41.

[2] *Report*, ELC, Minneapolis, June 21-27, 1950, pp. 52-53.

[3] *Report*, ELC, Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, p. 80.

[4] *LD*, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22.

In 1934 and 1935 the word from the Lutheran Deaconess Association was of the difficulty of placing deaconesses. "Our most difficult task is still finding positions for our graduates."[3] It may be supposed that at least two factors were involved: (1) the difficulty institutions had been having in raising funds because of the depression, and (2) the increasing demand in social work agencies for specially trained personnel. The latter supposition is borne out in the decision of the board of directors in 1934 to admit to the deaconess school thereafter only candidates who had completed their vocational or professional training as nurses, social workers, institutional workers, or teachers.[1] In 1937 and ever since, there have been reports of a shortage of deaconesses.[2]

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[1] Proceedings and Papers, Eighteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Chicago, May 16-17, 1928, p. 10.

[2] Proceedings and Papers, Nineteenth Conference, Lutheran Motherhouses, Columbus, Ohio, May 12-13, 1930, p. 9.

[3] LD, XIII, 1 (January, 1936), p. 3.

The placements of deaconesses continued to be predominantly in institutional work until the deaconess education program moved to Valparaiso University in 1943. Since that time the majority of placements have been in parish work.[3] Deaconesses are still being placed in social work, teaching, and nursing positions, but on the basis of professional studies taken in addition to the baccalaureate curriculum at Valparaiso.[4]

II. EDUCATION OF DEACONESSES

Deaconess Motherhouse, Milwaukee

The first departure at Milwaukee from the old standard deaconess curriculum of one school year came in 1932, when a two year curriculum was inaugurated.[5] The first three semesters of the new program were given to theoretical studies;[6] the fourth semester was spent in a course in practical nursing in the deaconess-owned Milwaukee Hospital.[1] The content of the curriculum was traditional: of sixty semester hours of class work distributed through three semesters, there were twenty-three hours in Bible study, four in Christian ethics and doctrine, five in church and missionary history, six in worship and church music, fourteen in diaconics and the inner mission, two in "personal work," and six in child psychology and Sunday School methods. Field work comprised weekly Sunday School teaching and eight weeks of daily vacation Bible school work in the summer. Some deaconesses went directly from the fourth semester into such forms of institutional work as they qualified for. Others, who were thought apt, were admitted to the three year professional nursing program of the Milwaukee Hospital.[2]

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[1] LD, II, 3 (July, 1934), pp. 5-6.

[2] LD, XIV, 3 (July, 1937), p. 3; XXX, 1 (January, 1953), p. 8.

[3] Kohlmeier, p. 30. [4] Quiz, pp. 7-8.

[5] DA, III, 3 (October, 1932), p. 7.

[6] DA, V, 1 (April, 1934), p. 7.

In 1937 readers of the Deaconess Annals were acquainted with the fact that deaconesses were beginning to be sent on for more specialized education, as in occupational therapy, child care, and the like. The motherhouse had to find the funds for it and endure the temporary loss of womanpower involved, not only because such training added to the prestige of the diaconate, but because the deaconesses' services were in demand in more and more fields.[1]

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[1] DA, V, 2 (July, 1934), p. 3. [2] Ibid., pp. 2-4.

In 1936 four deaconesses were enrolled in university courses.[2] In 1943 notice appeared of three more deaconesses working for college degrees.[3] In 1956 it was announced that the practical nursing course in the fourth semester was no longer being required of all deaconess students. Those who were going to college could begin to go full-time after the third semester; those who had their R.N. standing, or another profession, or were to serve in a non-professional capacity, were starting to work after the third semester.[4] A year later the deaconess curriculum was cut back to two semesters, with credit given for equivalent studies already taken elsewhere. There were at the time thirty-two to thirty-four semester hours of class work: twelve or thirteen hours of Bible study, five hours of church and missionary history, two hours of Christian ethics and doctrine, one hour on the life of the church, two hours of liturgy and hymnody, two hours on the deaconess and the inner mission, two hours of sociology, two hours of psychology, one of personal hygiene, one of orientation, and two or three of choir. Professional vocational aptitude testing was assured for the deaconess student during her first year.[1] The instruction in practical nursing was now being provided for those who elected it in a one year course at the Milwaukee Institute of Technology.[2] The door was left open to deaconesses to apply to the motherhouse for further educational opportunities.[3]

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[1] DA, VIII, 3 (October, 1937), pp. 2-6.

[2] Sister Elinor Falk, in letter dated January 24, 1961.

[3] DA, XIV, 1 (January, 1943), p. 16.

[4] DA, XXVII, 3 (July-September, 1956), p. 6.

Deaconess Institute, Omaha

At the beginning of the period under study deaconess education at Omaha was much the same as it was in the Philadelphia motherhouse, to which the first Omaha deaconess had been sent for training, with the exception that Swedish was taught in place of German.[4] In 1928 the deaconess course was lengthened to two school years. The Immanuel school of nursing (founded in 1922) had made graduation from high school an entrance requirement and the deaconess school was trying to do the same. Subject matters dealt with in new courses were elements of worship, inner missions, foreign missions, home missions, social service, institutional management, child psychology and education, speech, and parish work.[5] One and two year courses were also available to women who did not wish to become deaconesses but wanted to work in congregations, institutions, or mission fields.[1] Besides those available on the campus, field work opportunities were opened in congregations and social work agencies in Omaha.[2] In 1931 the deaconess institute reported extensive field trips to social agencies and courts, designed to prepare the deaconesses to make sound referrals.[3] In 1933 the school year was lengthened to eight months and put on a formal full-time basis; courses were added in psychology, sociology, and occupational therapy. The social service course was elaborated into courses in mental pathology, family and child welfare, and principles and methods of social work. Most of the practical training through field work was placed in the summer months.[4]

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[1] Information, pp. 5-7. [2] Ibid., p. 8. [3] Ibid., p. 10.

[4] An. Report, IDI, 1921, p. 16.

[5] DB, VII, 6 (March, 1928), p. 4.

A strong effort was made by a new director of the Immanuel Deaconess Institute in 1946 not only to put deaconess education at Omaha on a college level, but to obtain credit toward a bachelor's degree for it at the colleges of the Augustana Church.[5]

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[1] Minutes, Augustana, Omaha, June 16-21, 1927, p. 107.

[2] Minutes, Augustana, Des Moines, June 8-13, 1928, p. 128.

[3] DB, XI, 2 (June, 1931), pp. 3,5.

[4] DB, XIII, 1 (June, 1933), p. 4; XIII, 3 (October, 1933) p. 7.

[5] DB, XXVII, 1 (June, 1946), p. 3.

At the same time a more elaborate curriculum at the deaconess institute was announced. All incoming candidates for the diaconate were to take the same first year course, chiefly in Bible and Christianity. At the end of the first year, according to the projection of 1946, the candidate was to be given aptitude tests and advised about the following stage, which could have been the three year course in nursing at Immanuel Hospital, or a parish worker's course, or a Christian welfare course, each of the latter requiring one more year at the deaconess institute. In all three cases, if the ability and future usefulness of the candidate seemed to require it, the additional college work necessary for a bachelor's degree was to be offered. On the whole, the same subject matter as in 1933 was projected as distributed through the three years of deaconess education outlined.[1]

Omaha's educational plans were further developed in 1948 with the announcement of a Christian Service Internship Year on a graduate level (1949-50), which was to serve as a final year of seminars and clinical training before the deaconess' consecration and also as a self-contained program for other applicants, who were required to be college graduates.[2] (Details were given at the same time about a School of Home and Social Missions for non-deaconess students, with a two year non-accredited program for prospective parish workers and a one year program for institutional workers.)[1] The first year of deaconess education had not yet been accredited by the church's colleges at the time, but it was still expected that it would be.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 3-4. [2] DB, XXVII, 6 (April, 1948), pp. 1-2.

The structure of courses envisioned in 1948 was too elaborate to sustain when it failed to motivate a significant increase in the number of new candidates. It was replaced in 1950 by a simpler arrangement, calling for a basic five year preparation that comprised but one year of theoretical and practical studies at Immanuel, a second year of intensive Bible study at an approved Bible school, and three years of professional or collegiate study.[3] The way was left open for selected deaconesses to acquire bachelor's and higher degrees. The first semester at Immanuel was given to courses in Bible, diaconics, psychology, social service, and speech; the second semester to supervised experience in the various branches of service on the Immanuel campus.[4]

Under all the various arrangements until 1958, there was no charge for room, board, or tuition to deaconess students.[5]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 2-3, 5. [2] Ibid., p. 5.

[3] DB, XIX, 5 (February, 1950), p. 14.

[4] DB, XX, 2 (March, 1951), pp. 3-4. [5] Ibid., p. 4.

The major reorganization of the diaconate ordered by the Augustana Church in 1958 and 1959 included requirements that "deaconess education be established at levels which lead to professional accreditation" and that "the cost of deaconess training be regarded as a responsibility of the individual."[1] While it is being determined how to meet the new requirements of the church, the deaconess school at Omaha is temporarily without a student body.

The biennial conferences of the Immanuel sisterhood have also been intended to have some educational value, at least as stimulus to continued study and professional growth, although they have been limited in recent years to two days in length.[2]

Increasingly in recent years deaconesses have acquired not only bachelors' degrees[3] but also masters' degrees, in social work,[4] hospital administration,[5] education and personnel service;[6]

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[1] Minutes, Augustana, Jamestown, N.Y., June 16-22, 1958, p. 287, 12 B and 12 C.

[2] DB, X, 5 (December, 1930), pp. 2-3.

[3] DB, XXI, 6 (April, 1942), p. 6.

[4] DB, XXIX, 2 (August, 1949), p. 5.

[5] DB, XXII, 3 (April, 1953), p. 5.

[6] DB, XXXVI, 3 (June, 1957), pp. 4-5. It is a fact, though regrettable, that the editors of the Deaconess Banner were careless about volume numbers.

some earned them as deaconesses, others prior to entering the diaconate. One deaconess was admitted to studies at the church's theological seminary.

Deaconess Home, Chicago

In 1918 deaconess education at the Chicago motherhouse consisted of a three year course in nursing that also contained many hours of instruction in Bible, Christian doctrine, and diaconics. The students spent twenty-four weeks per year, from October through April, in their theoretical courses of all kinds and from seven to nine hours per week in deaconess class sessions. In three years they spent the equivalent of almost one year in the traditional deaconess curriculum: Bible, doctrine, the diaconate, church history, and the care of souls, and a little more than the equivalent of two years in nursing subject matter and English.[1]

In the light of the course content it is not surprising that when an accredited school of nursing was opened at the hospital in 1926, the nursing sisters had to take a post-graduate course before trying the state board examination for the R.N. status.[2]

In 1928 an effort was made to establish an accredited program of social service education within the deaconess training school;[1] the school was simultaneously thrown open to non-deaconess students, in the evident hope of attracting many more recruits to church work.[2] A three year course was projected for deaconesses and missionaries; the first two years were to be used also for educating parish and institutional workers.[3] The projection was far more elaborate (even to elective courses in social work) than could be sustained. The school opened in 1929 with nine students.[4] In the fall of 1930 there was only one student admitted, and there was only an occasional social work student thereafter.[5] No more was heard of the training of non-deaconess students.

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[1] An. Report, LDHH, 1918-19, pp. 30-31.

[2] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, p. 12.

In 1936 it was reported that the deaconess school had simplified its curriculum. There were now four semesters of course work. The first three combined the traditional subjects of the deaconess school with strongly social work oriented disciplines such as psychology, child psychology, child welfare, economics, case work, and public welfare administration. The fourth semester was given to Bible and basic business subjects. The nursing course, for those who entered it, followed.[1] However the numbers of deaconess candidates could not sustain a separate school. In 1945 it was reported that the new candidate had been enrolled in the Lutheran Bible Institute in Chicago.[2]

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[1] Helen O. Ackert, "The Contribution of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital to the Community" (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Chicago, 1958), p. 19.

[2] An. Report, LDHH, 1927-28, pp. 16-17.

[3] DN, April, 1930, p. 1.

[4] Official Reports from the District Conventions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, (Minneapolis, 1929), p. 331.

[5] DN, February, 1932, p. 2; September-November, 1935, p. 3.

There were also some students in recent years who were sent to college by the motherhouse[3] and others who entered the diaconate with college or professional training either begun or behind them.[4] The last student entered the Chicago school in 1953.[5]

It was in 1946 that the board of directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in effect asked the Evangelical Lutheran Church what it would do about the declining diaconate, and that action led to the present Commission on Diaconic Service.[6]

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[1] An. Report, 1935-36, LDHH, p. 40.

[2] DN, September-October, 1945, p. 4.

[3] DN, March-April, 1947, p. 3.

[4] DN, September-October, 1950, p. 4.

[5] Roll Book of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Training School, Chicago, September, 1929, to May, 1954.

[6] *Vide* fuller account above, in discussion of recruitment.

The educational program of the commission invites girls to begin making application for admission to the diaconate as juniors in college. They are asked to minor in religion and to major in a pre-professional field in consultation with the commission. Following graduation from college or achievement of R.N. status, they are required to attend a six weeks Christian Service Institute on the campus of Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, conducted as an intensive graduate school in Bible, theology, the life of the church, diaconics, and counseling.[1] Upon successful completion of the institute course and after a colloquium with the commission, the candidates are recommended by the commission for consecration by the president of the church.[2]

In 1959 the Christian Service Institute attracted thirty-nine students, of whom eleven completed the six weeks course.[3]

The commission is continuing to contemplate changes in the arrangements now operative, both because it is dissatisfied with them and because in the face of the merger of the Evangelical

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[1] The Christian Service Institute -- A Lay School of Theology (pamphlet, Minneapolis: Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1960.)

[2] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 21-27, 1950, pp. 52-53; and Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, p. 80.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, April 19-21, 1960, p. 127.

Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church, effective January 1, 1961, it is interested in a unification of the two diaconates involved, those of Chicago and Milwaukee.[1]

A new definition of the deaconess has already emerged.

> A deaconess . . . is one who recognizes the inner call from God; who will pursue the prescribed training courses; who will voluntarily make the required promise or declaration; and is approved and consecrated by the Church.[2]

The promise? ". . . to become a servant of the Church for 'so long as God shall give her grace to continue in this calling.'"[3]

Deaconess Association, Fort Wayne

There are three phases of the history of deaconess education in the Synodical Conference. In the first period, 1921-1935, the education was in the classical deaconess mode. The candidate in almost every case took the three year hospital course in nursing and, simultaneously, instruction in Bible, catechism, and diaconics. There were also courses in the Lutheran confessions, church and missionary history, and "spiritual ministry."[4]

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[1] Commission on Diaconic Service, Minutes of meeting of July 28, 1960, Minneapolis.

[2] Report, ELC, Mineapolis, June 21-27, 1950, p. 52.

[3] Report, ELC, Minneapolis, June 9-15, 1954, p. 80.

[4] LD, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22.

Carried along by the initial enthusiasm, the Deaconess Association established three other schools in this early period. Schools for deaconess nurses were begun in the Lutheran Hospital at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, in 1922, and in the Lutheran Hospital at Hot Springs, South Dakota, in 1924. Another school was begun in the Bethesda Lutheran Home (for the feebleminded) in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1925.[1] The last-named school prepared deaconesses vocationally for practical nursing only, in a two year course. Fort Wayne and Hot Springs offered three year programs qualifying students for the R.N. examinations.[2] The Beaver Dam nursing course was not accredited by the state.[3] The religious curriculums were largely the same in the four schools.

The board of directors of the Lutheran Deaconess Association proposed in 1926 to develop a corps of "practical deaconesses," as contrasted with nursing deaconesses, who were to be given a one year course in practical nursing at Watertown, accompanied by ten hours per week of religious subject matter, and then two years of field work in city missions, parishes, and charitable institutions, along with high school business and music courses.[1] However this program became too difficult to administer.[2]

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[1] LD, XXXVI, 2 (April, 1959), p. 2.

[2] LD, II, 3 (July, 1925), p. 22.

[3] LD, VII, 2 (April, 1930), pp. 13-14.

The Hot Springs school was closed in 1930 because of the difficulty, as was reported, in securing instructors for the deaconess courses.[3] The board decided in 1934 to close the Beaver Dam and Watertown schools and to consolidate its activity in the Fort Wayne school, admitting only candidates who had completed their vocational or professional training.[4]

The second period in the history of deaconess education at Fort Wayne was from 1935-1943. The reorganized, purely diaconic school began with a one year course.[5] The subject matter content was the same as in the first period,[6] with the addition of courses in psychology, child psychology, social service work, and child training, to which was added some practical experience in parishes and institutions.[7] For the school year 1940-41, the course was lengthened to three semesters in order to provide one semester of field work.[1] In the fall of 1941 a fourth semester (third semester of academic work) was added in order to make possible six semester hours of psychology and sociology at the Indiana University extension center in Fort Wayne, as well as the full semester of field work under recognized agencies in child welfare and family service.[2] It was also noted now that social service was being taught by a trained social worker, city mission work by a city mission pastor, women's missionary work in the Orient by a pastor-missionary, and the other religious subject matter by the superintendent.[3]

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[1] LD, III, 2 (April, 1926), p. 15.

[2] LD, XII, 4 (October, 1935), p. 2.

[3] LD, VIII, 1 (January, 1931), p. 3.

[4] LD, XI, 3 (July, 1934), pp. 5-6. [5] Kohlmeier, p. 27.

[6] Vide p. 323. [7] LD, XII, 4 (October, 1935), p. 3.

The third phase of deaconess education under the Lutheran Deaconess Association began with the removal to the campus of Valparaiso University in the fall of 1943. At first the course remained four semesters in length, including field work, and approximated in subject matter what it had been.[4] In 1946 the board of the Lutheran Deaconess Association voted to extend deaconess training to embrace the full four year baccalaureate curriculum, and the university prepared a major in religion especially for the deaconess students.[5] All deaconess students were required to major in religion; they minored in music, sociology, social work, and psychology.[1] The field work was put into the two summers following the sophomore and junior years.[2] The two courses specifically organized for the deaconess students were Religious Education 120, Principles of Religious Education, and Religious Education 156, The Field of Deaconess Work, which surveyed the past and present scope of deaconess work.[3]

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[1] Kohlmeier, p. 27. [2] LD, XX, 1 (January, 1943), p. 4.

[3] LD, XIX, 4 (October, 1942), p. 8.

[4] LD, XX, 3 (July, 1943), p. 2.

[5] LD, XXIII, 3(July, 1946), p. 2.

Modifications of this basic educational pattern were introduced. A graduate nurse who desires to become a deaconess may be admitted to the ranks after one year of study at Valparaiso, chiefly in the subject matter of religion. Professionally trained women accepted for foreign missionary service may be made deaconesses after one year of study in the school of missions at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis.[4] Candidates with baccalaureate or higher degrees may also be admitted to the diaconate after one year of study in the field of religion at Valparaiso.[5]

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[1] LD, XXXII, 4 (October, 1955), p. 8.

[2] LD, XXVI, 1 (January, 1949), p. 5.

[3] "Courses in Religion and Courses in Religious Education," Valparaiso University; Department of Religion, (mimeographed), p. 3.

[4] LD, XXVIII, 4 (October, 1951), p. 7.

[5] LD, XXXI, 3 (July, 1954), p. 7.

According to the most recent modification all deaconess students not already seniors in 1960 will be required to take a full year of supervised field work between their junior and senior years in college in a parish, mission, or institution of the church.[1]

The Lutheran Deaconess Association has also established the understanding that attendance at the annual deaconess conference is vital to the professional growth and that time spent by deaconesses at the three day conference is not to be counted as vacation time.[2]

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[1] LD, XXXV, 2 (April, 1958), p. 4.

[2] "Guidelines for Deaconesses," Fort Wayne: Lutheran Deaconess Association, (mimeographed), p. 2.

PART IV

OTHER PROTESTANT DEACONESS WORK

CHAPTER XVII

THE OTHER PROTESTANT DIACONATES OF WOMEN

The plan of the study requires the introduction now of four other Protestant diaconates of women: those of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and The Methodist Church. It is proposed to present each diaconate in terms of a sketch of its history and general character.

I. THE DIACONATE OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH (THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

The deaconess enterprise in the Evangelical and Reformed Church[1] belongs to the type of those discussed under the heading, "Other Lutheran Diaconates -- Group II," that is, among the deaconess movements that have had the benefit of a general renovation. This has come recently, in an action of the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church taken in July, 1959.

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[1] The Evangelical and Reformed Church was formed by a merger in 1934 of the General Conference of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States. It had a membership in 1959 of 809,137 persons (Yearbook of the American Churches, New York: Office of Publication and Distribution, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, 1960, p. 254). It has since (1957) entered with the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches into a new organization, the United Church of Christ.

Prior to the action of the church, the diaconate had been regarded as an entirely private enterprise within the church, that is, the responsibility only of the institutions in which deaconesses were trained and in which they served; furthermore the diaconate had almost become moribund, and it is too early to see whether the action of the church will be able to conserve it.

In the original enthusiasm for deaconess work in the Evangelical Synod of North America, twelve other deaconess institutions were founded between 1892 and 1917. Ten of these proceeded to develop deaconess hospitals, while one operated a home for epileptics and feeble-minded and another concentrated on training deaconesses for parish work.[1] Eight of the hospitals flourished and continued to be known as "deaconess" hospitals;[2] four of them continued to have deaconesses on their staffs.[3] Wherever two or more deaconesses are working together in an institution, they are referred to as a distinct sisterhood.[1] However only the Evangelical Deaconess Hospital of St. Louis has succeeded into recent times in functioning as a motherhouse and in training deaconesses.[2]

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[1] Frederick P. Jens, Principles of Deaconess Work (St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1918), pp. 87-112. The chief sources for the early history of Evangelical deaconess work are this volume by Jens and "A Brief History," in the Forty-first Annual Report of the Evangelical Deaconess Society, St. Louis, 1930, pp. 5-7.

[2] Yearbook and Almanac of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1935), p. 72.

[3] Ministers of Mercy, J. Mart Bailey, reprinted from The Messenger, July 20, 1954, p. 4.

The St. Louis deaconess work began in March, 1889, with the organization of the Evangelical Deaconess Society with seventy members. Its purpose was to care for the sick and poor, especially among the membership of the Evangelical Synod in the St. Louis area. It thought of deaconesses as essentially properly trained nurses who could be counted on in addition to do their work "in the spirit of Christian love and mercy."[3] A pastor's widow and her adopted daughter, who were nurses, volunteered as the first deaconesses. A gift of a house by one of the members of the society enabled the deaconess home and hospital to go into service the same year.

The work prospered. After three years, when there were eleven deaconesses, a former public school building was acquired as a deaconess home, and a new hospital building was built adjacent to it to accommodate forty patients. In 1906 another hospital building was built on the same property with a capacity of 100 beds. A much larger hospital was erected in 1930, and a further addition in 1957, which ultimately (with their present capacity) accommodated approximately 400 patients at a time.[1]

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[1] Acts and Proceedings of the Eleventh Meeting of the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, Oberlin, Ohio, July 1-5, 1959, p. 153.

[2] Announcement of The School for Deaconesses of the Evangelical Deaconess Society, St. Louis, 1953, p. 8.

[3] Jens, op. cit., p. 87.

For fifty years the sisterhood grew with the hospital work, so that deaconess nurses continued to fill all nursing positions, and there were still a few deaconesses to spare for work at various stations.[2] But the deaconess population peak was reached in 1937, and in 1943 it became necessary to admit non-deaconess student nurses to the deaconess school;[3] thereafter, while the enrolment of the school of nursing was increasing rapidly, the admission of deaconess candidates declined, until in the later 1950's there were no more deaconess candidates at all.

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[1] Seventieth Annual Report of the Evangelical Deaconess Society, St. Louis, December 31, 1959, p.4.

[2] Fiftieth Annual Report, Evangelical Deaconess Society, St. Louis, 1940, pp. 12,21.

[3] Fifty-third Annual Report, Evangelical Deaconess Soc., St. Louis, 1942, pp. 6, 30.

Evangelical and Reformed Motherhouse[1]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1918	-	-	-	87
1928	52	4	19	75
1937*	85	8	54	147
1938	92	7	44	143
1948	65	3	3	71
1959	-	-	0	45

*1937 was the year of peak deaconess population.

In 1928, when a relatively large number of deaconesses was still serving at various stations, there were two deaconesses at other church hospitals, five at three homes for aged persons, one at an orphans' home, one in a city mission, one in Honduras as a missionary nurse, and one in parish work.[2]

The Evangelical deaconess work was admittedly begun in emulation of Fliedner, and in almost every respect the Kaiserswerth tradition was being carried on faithfully in 1918, as is indicated in the textbook on diaconics published by the motherhouse pastor, the Reverend Frederick P. Jens, in that year.[1]

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[1] The sources of the figures in the table: 1918 -- Jens, op. cit., p. 90. 1928 -- 38th Annual Report, Evangelical Deaconess Society, St. Louis, pp. 25-27. 1937 -- 48th Annual Report, pp. 16-18. 1938 -- 49th Annual Report, pp. 20-22. 1948 -- 58th Annual Report, pp. 19-20. 1959 -- 70th Annual Report, p. 16. The dash (-) is a symbol for the non-availability of data under the rubric.

[2] 38th Annual Report, Ev. Deac. Society, 1928, p. 26.

II. THE DIACONATE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

The remaining American deaconess work that developed its early experience in the orthodox Kaiserswerth pattern is that of the General Conference Mennonite Church; both church and deaconess work have their headquarters in Newton, Kansas.[2]

Of special interest in connection with the Mennonite diaconate is the fact that under the leadership of the general church body a sharp break with the past began to be made in 1954, and although the end of the ensuing developments is not yet in sight, at least some experience with the problems involved in rehabilitating the diaconate has been achieved.

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[1] Principles of Deaconess Work. See also the catalogue or school announcement of the time, Aufnahmebedingungen für Diakonissen (St. Louis: Evangelical Deaconess Society, [1919]).

[2] There are a number of Mennonite church organizations in the U. S., deriving in part from separate immigrations from Europe. The General Conference Mennonite Church was organized in 1860 and numbered 35,351 members, mostly in the mid-west, in 1959. See Benson Y. Landis, ed., Yearbook of the American Churches (New York: Office of Publication and Distribution, National Council of the Churches of Christ, 1960), p. 256. Also Cornelius Krahn and John F. Schmidt, eds., A Century of Witness (Newton: Mennonite Publication Office, 1959), pp. 1-93.

The Reverend David Goerz, a leader among the Mennonite communities that had come from Prussia and Russia to settle in Kansas in the 1870's and 1880's, appealed to the General Conference in 1890 to consider beginning a deaconess work. After a decade of intermittent discussion the conference formally gave its blessing to any local group that would venture to make a beginning.[1]

The first candidate presented herself to Goerz himself in 1900. Frieda Kaufmann had been a kindergarten charge of deaconesses in the Black Forest in her childhood and as an adolescent in Germany had been friendly with some Roman Catholic nuns; she had formed a determination to be a "sister."[2] She was admitted to Bethel (Mennonite) College in Newton, of which Goerz was business manager. After two years there she took the two year course in the German

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[1] Frieda Kaufmann, "The Bethel Deaconess Institutions," In the Service of the King, I, 3 (March, 1942), p. 5.

[2] Ibid., p. 6.

Deaconess Hospital in Cincinnati. Sister Frieda began work as a visiting deaconess in Newton. Meanwhile the board of directors of Bethel College had taken the lead in organizing the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital Society in 1903. In 1908 a fifty bed hospital was dedicated, and at the same time the first three deaconesses, including Frieda Kaufmann, were "ordained."[1]

Efforts were made by Mennonites to develop deaconess training schools in five other locations between 1911 and 1930, some of which succeeded for a while. One of these, in Mountain Lake, Minnesota, was actively sponsored as a station by the Bethel Deaconess Hospital. Others were said to have been inspired to some degree by the institution at Newton. Nevertheless all but the Bethel Hospital felt compelled to give up the search for deaconess candidates before 1930.[2]

Like the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital, these other institutions had the ideal of training deaconesses, not only for the sake of the local hospital, but for missionary and other work, and most of them seem to have sent out missionary nurses. However the local hospital was the primary concern, and if deaconess candidates did not materialize, ordinary nurses would have to do. All the institutions prospered as hospitals.

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[1] Lena M. Smith, "The Life Story of Sister Frieda," The Mennonite, Berne, Indiana, LIX, 32 (August 15, 1944), pp. 1-2.

[2] Silver Anniversary Memorial, 1908-1933, (Newton: The Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital, 1933), pp. 12-13. "The Deaconess and Her Ministry," Mennonite Life, III, 1 (January, 1948), pp. 39-37. The Mennonite, XXXIII, 3 (Jan. 17, 1918), p. 5; XXXVIII, 22 (May 31, 1923), p. 1; XXXIX, 38 (June 6, 1923), p. 4; XL, 37 (September 17, 1925), pp. 2-3; XL, 39 (October 1, 1925), pp. 1-2; XLI, 14 (April 8, 1926), p. 1; XLI, 15 (April 15, 1926), pp. 1-2.

The first motherhouse pastor began service in Newton in 1913, dividing his time between the Bethel motherhouse and the classrooms of Bethel College, where he taught.[1] When he resigned in 1920, he was not succeeded by another pastor until 1929, and then by one who stayed only until 1932.[2] Throughout all this time the directing sister was the real superintendent of the hospital, as she was also in name when there was no pastor.

A published deaconess roster showed no candidates admitted between 1929 (when there were three) and 1939 (when there was one) who were still on hand in 1943.[3] One more entered in 1942, one in 1948, and one in 1953.[4] A plateau of deaconess population had been reached in the 1930's and 1940's, and there was no longer any hope in the middle 1950's that the old form of the diaconate would attract a significant number of additional recruits. The last two deaconesses ordained (in 1958) were non-professional women who served in the hospital office and housekeeping department respectively.[1] The Bethel Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing (founded in 1938) had a graduating class of twenty-two in 1959.[2]

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[1] Silver Anniversary Memorial, p. 26. [2] Ibid., pp. 31, 32.

[3] In the Service of the King, II, 2 (February, 1943). This periodical is the bi-monthly publication of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, Kansas. Abbreviation in subsequent footnotes: ISK.

[4] ISK, XVII, 2 (March-April, 1959), pp. 18-19.

Mennonite Motherhouse[3]

	active deaconesses	retired	probationers	total
1908	3	-	3	6
1918	11	-	14	25
1928	21	0	9	30
1938	(no data available)			
1942	18	11	1	30
1948	-	-	1	28
1959	-	-	0	23

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[1] ISK, XVI, 3 (May-June, 1958), pp. 13-14.

[2] ISK, XVII, 5 (September-October, 1959), photographs.

[3] The sources of the figures are as follows: for 1908, Silver Anniversary Memorial, p. 25; for 1918, The Mennonite, XXXIII, 24 (June 13, 1918), p. 1; for 1928, Silver Anniversary Memorial, pp. 18, 21, 32; for 1942, In the Service of the King, I, 2 (February, 1942), p. 4; for 1948, Mennonite Life, III, 1 (January, 1948), p. 32; for 1959, In the Service of the King, XVII, 2 (March-April, 1959), pp. 18-19. Dash (-) signifies non-availability of data.

In 1918, when the Newton deaconesses were almost at their numerical peak, they were engaged as follows: besides those in the Newton hospital there were two at another hospital, one serving as a public health nurse, and another serving as school nurse for the town of Newton. In the meantime a relatively substantial number had been sent off into foreign mission work, and all such were no longer counted as members of the diaconate because they were supported and directed by the board of foreign missions of the church.[1]

The Mennonite diaconate was founded on thoroughly Kaiserswerthian principles;[2] it remained as it was founded in all respects as recently as 1948, when a picture story about the deaconesses in Mennonite Life indicated that nothing had changed.[3] Even the garb was as old-fashioned as ever, comprising for dress wear a long-sleeved, long-skirted black dress and a white-edged black pill-box cap tied under the chin with a starched white bow. The working garb was a long-sleeved grey dress, with a full-skirted white apron.

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[1] Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital (Newton: Board of Directors, Bethel Deaconess Society, 1918), pp. 23-25.

[2] See the Statuten der Bethel-Diakonissenstift und Hospitalgesellschaft (Newton, 1922), pp. 1-22.

[3] III, 1 (January, 1948), pp. 30-37.

There were two waves of reform, after the diaconate had clearly become moribund in its older form. The first yielded the "new deaconess program" of 1951. Worked out by the board of directors of the Bethel Deaconess Society on the behest of the General Conference, it was essentially conservative. The second wave is still in motion, but already has constituted a more radical reform, even to the abandonment of the terms "deaconess" and "diaconate;" it operates under the title, "Women in Church Vocations."

III. THE DIACONATE OF WOMEN IN THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In the case of the two diaconates that remain to be discussed, the Episcopal and the Methodist, recognition of indebtedness to Fliedner of Kaiserswerth was again in order and was repeatedly declared. He had made a female diaconate a viable entity again and had thereby stimulated imitation here among still other church leaders who knew of church work to be done and of women who could do it. But in the instances of these two diaconates, Fliedner aroused not so much faithful imitation as further thought and differing conceptions of what the female diaconate ought to be.

The Episcopal Church is characterized more than any other Protestant communion by a strong sense of history and devotion to catholic tradition. Typical is the concern for the apostolic succession of the clergy and for the authenticity of holy orders in general. Accordingly when the concept of the deaconess was revived in Anglican circles, it tended to be in conformity with the usages of the ancient church.

The revival came a little earlier in England than in America. The Bishop of London admitted a woman to the office of deaconess as early as 1862, with the imposition of hands.[1] Subsequent research, especially that instituted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and published in The Ministry of Women (1919), discussion, and legislation in the Church of England produced the judgment that was expressed in the Lambeth Conferences of 1920, 1930, and 1948:

> 114. The Conference reaffirms Resolution 67 of the Conference of 1930 that "the Order of Deaconesses is for women the one and only Order of Ministry which we can recommend our branch of the Catholic Church to recognize and use." It also approves the resolution adopted 1939-1941 in both Houses of the Convocations of Canterbury and York "that the Order of Deaconesses is the one existing ordained ministry for women in the sense of being the only Order of Ministry in the Anglican Communion to which women are admitted by episcopal imposition of hands."[2]

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[1] Mary P. Truesdell, The Deaconess Office and Ministry, (Sycamore, Illinois: The National Conference of Deaconesses, 1952), p. 25.

[2] Quoted in Mary P. Truesdell, Does The Church Want Deaconesses? (National Conference of Deaconesses, no date, [1946-1949]), p. 5.

This statement disappointed some persons by failing to make deaconesses unequivocally the female equivalents of deacons.[1] On the other hand it was a substantial churchly recognition of deaconesses:

> In short, except for liturgical ministration which has always been limited to men, the diaconate is open to both men and women. Deaconesses are recorded as members of the clergy; they are *ex officio* members of all meetings of the clergy; a minimum salary is guaranteed for them, and provision is made for their proper retirement.[2]

The American Episcopal Church began a parallel development in 1864, when Bishop Wilmer of Alabama "instituted" three deaconesses, who became a small sisterhood and worked together in the care of war orphans under the bishop's direction. Bishop Wilmer instituted his last two deaconesses (of seven) with the laying on of hands in 1885; then, after the Episcopal Church had adopted its canon on deaconesses in 1889, he "bestowed on each [of the seven] the imposition of hands."[3] Bishop Potter of New York had set apart a deaconess with the imposition of hands in 1887.[4]

There was considerable enthusiasm following the adoption of the canon, and deaconess training schools were opened in San

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[1] See F. D. Bacon, *Women in the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1946), pp. 52-58.

[2] Royden F. Yerkes, *What is a Deaconess*? (Sycamore, Illinois: Central House for Deaconesses, 1957), p. 2.

[3] Truesdell, *Deaconess Office and Ministry*, p. 26. [4] *Ibid.*

Francisco, New Orleans, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, New York, Berkeley, Mobile, and Chicago.[1]

The earliest roster of the Episcopal deaconesses was published in 1909, twenty years after the adoption of the canon. At that time there were already 144 deaconesses listed.[2] In 1917 there were 194 named,[3] and in 1928 (and again in 1929), 224.[4] That was the peak of the population curve. There were 209 names in 1938,[5] 156 in 1948,[6] and 97 in 1958, including 57 who were inactive (retired).[7] None of the rosters indicated the numbers of candidates, and only in the last instance was the number of retired deaconesses recorded.

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[1] Ibid., p. 27.

[2] Living Church Annual and Whittaker's Churchman's Almanac (Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., 1909), pp. 128-30.

[3] Living Church Annual and Churchman's Almanac (Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., 1917), pp. 162-65.

[4] Living Church Annual (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1928), pp. 232-35.

[5] Living Church Annual (New York: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1938), pp. 150-52.

[6] Living Church Annual (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1948), pp. 152-53.

[7] Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A., Miami Beach, October 6-17, 1958, p. 410.

IV. THE DIACONATE OF WOMEN IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

It was the Methodist Church that succeeded in putting the largest number of deaconesses into the field. The history of this effort in the period under study falls into two parts. In 1939 there were three Methodist church bodies in the United States that contained five distinct deaconess organizations. For the years prior to 1940, therefore, it is necessary to consider the histories of these five diaconates. Since 1940, as a consequence of merger, there has been but one Methodist diaconate for women, belonging to one Methodist Church.

The diaconate of the former Methodist Protestant Church comes in for rather brief notice, since it had all but expired at the time of the merger in 1939.[1] This church provided for a deaconess movement in 1908, in a canon modeled after those of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.[2] Control was to be vested in the constituent conferences. A conference deaconess board was brought into being in the same year in Maryland. The first two deaconess candidates were received in 1910 and 1911 and sent to the Baltimore motherhouse of the United Lutheran Church for training. Eleven more candidates were received through 1921. A deaconess home was acquired in 1912, and regular instruction in deaconess work, Bible, and doctrine was begun at the home by local pastors in 1917. Most of the recruits also received nurse training in various hospitals. However in 1928, when only one deaconess remained, the deaconess home was closed. This same deaconess entered and worked with the consolidated deaconess organization until her retirement in 1947.

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[1] The chief source for the account of the deaconess work of the Methodist Protestant Church is a memorandum written for the Commission on Deaconess Work by Miss Lillian N. DeMoss, deaconess, in July, 1955, P. 2. The memorandum is in the files of the Commission on Deaconess Work.

[2] Journal of the 20th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, Pittsburgh, May 15-23, 1908, pp. 35-38.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was drawn into the deaconess work by three almost concurrent movements.[1] Lucy Rider Meyer, founder of the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions in 1885, began to develop a deaconess work with student volunteers in the summer of 1887. The movement spread from Chicago, particularly as graduates began new schools, and ultimately such deaconess institutions, governed by local boards and relatively independent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, founded the Methodist Deaconess Association in 1908 in order to work out certain problems together. The Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Association and Christ Hospital in Cincinnati are striking examples of the effectiveness of this movement.

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[1] The chief sources of the account of the early history of the diaconates of the Methodist Episcopal Church are (1) the Journal of the 26th Delegated General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, May 1-29, 1912, pp. 1368-1417. (2) "The History of the Deaconess Work under the Administration of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1880-1940," by Grace G. Steiner, Deaconess, 1955, P. 6. The MS is in the file of the Commission on Deaconess Work. (3) Flora A. Sorber, "The Methodist Deaconess Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church," 1955, P. 5. MS in the files of the Commission on Deaconess Work. (4) "Bethesda Hospital and Deaconess Association, Cincinnati, Ohio," P. 3, MS in file of Commission on Deaconess Work.

A deaconess movement more closely related to the church was initiated by the Woman's Home Missionary Society in 1888, on the prompting of Jane Bancroft, who had seen the successes of European diaconates while studying in Europe in 1886-1888. Through Miss Bancroft's energetic leadership another network of deaconess homes was inaugurated under the sponsorship of the Committee on Deaconess Work (later the Deaconess Bureau) of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, beginning in 1890 in Detroit. The Kansas City National Training School (now National College in Kansas City, Missouri), opened by this group in 1894, is still a major center for Methodist deaconess training.

In the meantime, largely because of the interest and leadership of the Reverend J. M. Thoburn, missionary to India and later bishop, who wanted to begin deaconess work in that country, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church adopted a canon in 1888 that recognized the deaconess as a church officer.[1]

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[1] Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal

She was not ordained, did not become a member of the clergy, but by virtue of the canon she was a person of specially recognized status in the church, the only classification of woman church worker so recognized then, and the only unordained woman so recognized now. (Since 1956 women have been admissible to full clergy rights in The Methodist Church.)[1]

The third unofficial factor drawing the Methodist Episcopal Church into deaconess work was supplied by the German Methodists in the church. Earliest and dominant institution was the German Deaconess Home and Bethesda Hospital in Cincinnati, founded in 1896, and its Dorcas Institute (training school), founded in 1910, the entire enterprise established through the leadership of the Reverend Christian Golder, a German Methodist pastor who had studied Lutheran and Methodist deaconess work in Germany. As in some other instances, however, the work of deaconess training came to a halt in the 1930's, while the hospital and its school of nursing flourished.

The interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church as a whole in the deaconess work were being represented in 1918 by the

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Church, New York, May 1-31, 1888, pp. 435-36. In subsequent references the Journal will be referred to as Gen. Conf, M. E. Ch.

[1] Doctrines and Discipline of The Methodist Church, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1960), p. 126.

General Deaconess Board, the successor to the board of bishops called for in the original canon of 1888. The General Deaconess Board was succeeded in turn by the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work in 1924. These boards had only advisory relations to the various deaconess institutions, with their local boards or, in other cases, responsibility to the Woman's Home Missionary Society. Nevertheless they were in a strong position with reference to the individual deaconess and contended for uniform high standards of admission and education throughout the church.[1]

In the meantime the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the third merging church body, had established the office of deaconess in 1902 in a canon very much like that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, adopted in 1888. Responsibility for recruitment and training was entrusted to the Woman's Missionary Council, a church agency interested in the prosecution of home and foreign missionary activity. The first class of five deaconesses was consecrated in 1903.[2]

The largest deaconess group in the Methodist Episcopal

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[1] 27th Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., Saratoga Springs, N. Y., May 1-29, 1916, pp. 671-72.

[2] A memorandum of excerpts relating to deaconess work from the Discipline and Journal of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, (no date, no pagination), in the file of the Commission on Deaconess Work.

Church was that most closely related to the organized church, the group administered by the Woman's Home Missionary Society. It had already enjoyed its heavy influx of recruits prior to 1918. Thus there were 698 deaconesses including 272 probationers in 1912.[1] However by 1918 the population had declined to 508 deaconesses including 68 unlicensed deaconesses (probationers),[2] and at the time of unification, 1939-1940, there were approximately 400, including 67 retired deaconesses.[3]

The next largest group was made up of the deaconesses affiliated with the Methodist Deaconess Association, who numbered approximately 300 including probationers and retired deaconesses in 1938.[4] There were also about 70 deaconesses affiliated in that year with the Bethesda Deaconess Association and perhaps 70 more who belonged to no administrative system.[5]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, numbered close to

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[1] 26th Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., Minneapolis, 1912, p. 1377.

[2] *37th Annual Report* of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1917-1918, p. 149. These annual reports will be referred to in the footnotes as WHMS.

[3] 59th, WHMS, 1939-1940, p. 140.

[4] 58th, WHMS, 1938-39, p. 134.

[5] *Ibid*., and 54th, WHMS, 1934-35, p. 134.

200 deaconesses in 1938.[1] The diaconate of the southern church was still growing at the time, for it had numbered but 82 members in 1917-1918[2] and 175 in 1928.[3]

There were thus more than 1000 deaconesses in the unified diaconate of The Methodist Church in 1940. In 1948 the total had declined to 835, of whom 251 were retired,[4] and in 1959 to 737, of whom 323 were retired.[5]

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[1] 58th, WHMS, 1938-39, p. 134.

[2] 8th Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1917-1918, p. 106. These annual reports will be referred to in subsequent footnotes by the abbreviation: WMC.

[3] 18th, WMC, 1927-28, pp. 222-24.

[4] 9th Annual Report, Woman's Division of Christian Service, Board of Missions of The Methodist Church, 1948-49, p. 146. These annual reports will be referred to in subsequent footnotes by means of the abbreviation: WDCS.

[5] 19th, WDCS, 1959-60, pp. 12-13 (reprint).

CHAPTER XVIII

CHANGES IN THE OTHER PROTESTANT DIACONATES OF WOMEN

(I)

The account of the changes since 1918 in the other Protestant diaconates of women begins with a consideration of deaconess recruitment.

I. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Deaconess Work of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

In the early part of the period under study, when the deaconess sisterhood was growing as rapidly as the needs of the expanding hospital demanded, recruitment seemed to be no problem, and nothing was said about it in the available literature. In 1938, when a committee appointed by the board of directors to study the diaconate reported, it was hinted that a considerable number of young women had become deaconesses in the St. Louis institution only because they wanted to become nurses, without having any intentions of remaining in the sisterhood. (Since 1889, 459 young women had entered the diaconate; 291 had withdrawn; 144 were active deaconesses.) The indications were, in the committee's judgment, that having no room, board, tuition, or other fees to pay in connection with nurse training had been a major recruitment inducement.[1] A remedy proposed at the time was reported as put into effect in 1941, when deaconess students were asked to sign notes for each year of tuition, one year's note to be cancelled for each year of service rendered after graduation.[2]

Recruitment became an acute problem after 1943, when the deaconess school was thrown open to non-deaconess students of nursing. The problem remained acute even after a deaconess was called to be field secretary, that is, to seek recruits, beginning in 1951.[3]

It was the virtual cessation of admissions that led the Evangelical and Reformed Church to establish the Committee to Study the Future of the Deaconess Order, in 1956.[4] The proposals of this committee, adopted by the church in 1959,[5] were intended to solve the recruitment problem[1] by removing such felt impediments as the dependency on the motherhouse, and by bringing new church recognition and status to the deaconess. Responsibility for recruitment and selection of deaconess candidates under the new plan was assigned to the Committee on Deaconess Service, to be composed of elected representatives of the church's Commission on Health and Welfare Services (formerly the Commission on Benevolent Institutions) and of the Deaconess Association, made up of all the deaconesses.[2] (Other details of the committee's proposals will be noted below, under the appropriate rubrics.)

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[1] 49th Annual Report of the Evangelical Deaconess Society, (St. Louis, 1938), pp. 8-9. The chief sources for the developments in the Evangelical and Reformed deaconess work are (1) the Annual Reports of the Evangelical Deaconess Society, which will be abbreviated to Ev. Deac. Soc. in subsequent footnotes, and (2) the Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, which will be abbreviated as E & R Ch.

[2] 52nd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1941, p. 17.

[3] 62nd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1951-1952, p. 4.

[4] E & R Ch., 10th Meeting, 1956, pp. 33-34, 392, 394.

[5] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 382.

Deaconess Work of the General Conference Mennonite Church

The older program counted on being its own best advertisement.

The conservative reform of 1951 evidently was guided by the judgment that there were two basic needs in connection with recruitment. One was to get rid of the features of deaconess work that discouraged prospective applicants. The other was to get the deaconess enterprise better known in the church. In connection with the former it was proposed to modify the garb and clarify the situation with reference to the deaconess vows, discussed below. In the case of the latter, it was proposed to develop a constant, year-round program of public relations, through the church press, church conventions, and local congregations, and to send two deaconesses as a recruitment team on a tour of the churches.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 153. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Under the current reconstruction of women's church work, one of the new recruits functions as a promotional secretary, and some new recruitment folders have been produced. Annual vocational conferences for recruitment have been initiated at one of the Mennonite theological seminaries.[2]

Deaconess Work of the Protestant Episcopal Church

There was no general provision for recruitment in 1918, but each bishop managed it in his diocese as he saw fit, and there is no record of what was done. A survey of women's work by the Woman's Auxiliary of the church in 1923 indicated there was a recruitment problem, women having been found eager to take up opportunities to render spiritual services, but not to become deaconesses.[3] The demands of the recruitment situation were the items chiefly appealed to in 1925, when the Commission on Adapting the Office of Deaconess to the Present Tasks of the Church urged that deaconesses be given a more definite and authoritative commission, a more uniform and complete training, and more adequate support.[1] Years later it was on the same basis of the hope of improving recruitment that the Joint Commission on Deaconesses commended the deaconess Retiring Fund to the church and recommended a program of scholarships and of publicity for deaconess history and the current opportunities in deaconess work.[2]

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[1] ISK, X, 2 (April, 1951), pp. 3-8.

[2] Minutes, Committee on Women in Church Vocations, Newton, February 2, 1957, p. 4.

[3] Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., Washington, D.C., October 10-25, 1928, pp. 449-50. In subsequent notes this Journal will be referred to as Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch.

The National Conference of Deaconesses (the organization of Episcopal deaconesses) appointed a committee to promote and publicize the deaconess order in 1944.[3] In 1949 the conference urged the General Convention of the church to reaffirm the status of the order and make it known to the church,[4] and in 1950 it suggested to deaconesses that prayers for the order be urged upon their rectors.[5]

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[1] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1925, p. 600.

[2] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1937, pp. 240, 423-24.

[3] The Deaconess, December, 1944, pp. 2-3. This newsletter of the National Conference of Deaconesses carries no volume or issue numbers.

[4] The Deaconess, March, 1950, p. 3.

[5] The Deaconess, December, 1950, p. 2.

The first provision of a national field worker to seek enlistments was made in 1942, in connection with the founding of a program for training deaconesses and other church workers at Daniel Baker College in Brownwood, Texas. The House of Bishops voted approval,[1] but the house at Daniel Baker College had to be closed in 1953, and the field worker project was dropped.[2] In the meantime the New York Training School for deaconesses, which was no longer functioning as a school, began a program of devoting its resources to recruiting deaconess candidates and assisting with their education through scholarships.[3] The current best hope seems to lie in the recruitment of mature women who have already accumulated professional training and experience which they wish to put at the church's disposal. There were four candidates for deaconess standing in 1960.[4]

Recruitment of deaconesses in the Episcopal Church was complicated throughout the period by the existence of a number of religious orders for women, several of which were more active than contemplative and thus directly competitive with the diaconate of women.

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[1] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1952, p. 56.

[2] The Deaconess, February, 1953, pp. 3, 9.

[3] Episcopal Church Annual (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1958), p. 139.

[4] The Retiring Fund for Deaconesses (Evanston: Central House for Deaconesses, 1960, folder), p. 2.

Communities for women had been revived in the Church of England in the mid nineteenth century as an aspect of Anglo-Catholicism. They enjoyed more rapid growth than the similar communities for men; in 1909 it was calculated that there were more sisters in England than there had been when Henry VIII closed the convents.[1]

Some of the English orders founded American branches. Other communities originated in the United States. Altogether fifteen extant orders were established in the United States between 1856 and 1957.[2] The first canon regulating religious communities was adopted in 1913.[3]

Those of the orders that provided for an active rather than a contemplative life and those that fostered a mixed life were engaged in such work as maintaining schools for girls, convalescent hospitals, and children's homes; producing altar bread, ecclesiastic embroidery, altar linens, and illuminating; providing for retreats, operating lending libraries, and doing parish and mission work.[1]

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[1] Henry O. Wakeman, An Introduction to the History of the Church of England (tenth edition; London: Rivington's, 1923), pp. 506-07.

[2] Episcopal Church Annual (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1959), pp. 131-33.

[3] William W. Manross, A History of the American Episcopal Church (New York: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1935), p. 315.

The religious orders bound themselves by regular monastic vows including those of chastity, poverty, and obedience.[2]

Deaconess Work of The Methodist Church

In the deaconess work of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, recruitment was the responsibility of the society, which was also an employer of large numbers of women workers as home missionaries.[3] (Methodist "home missionaries" were similar in function to Lutheran "inner mission" workers.) Since most deaconesses were placed in the home mission work (including parish work) that the society was propagating and administering, its recruitment activities had the realism and urgency appropriate to a large employer who always had numerous positions to fill. Furthermore the society was in constant communication with branch women's societies in every local Methodist church and thus was able to make its personnel needs felt.

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[1] Inez M. Cavert, _Women in American Church Life_ (New York: Friendship Press, 1948), pp. 79-80.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 79. [3] Steiner, _loc_. _cit_.

The General Deaconess Board and the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work used their great prestige as boards of the General Conference of the church and their access to its official organs in order to help all the northern diaconates with recruitment.[1]

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, responsibility for recruitment belonged to the Woman's Missionary Council, an organization similar to the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the northern church, which also administered many home mission projects and had contact with women's societies in the local churches.[2] It is particularly noteworthy that the Woman's Missionary Council pioneered most of the innovations by which the educational standards of deaconesses were raised and the female diaconate generally has been purged of features that were disagreeable to many modern women, such as the allowance system, the garb, and the lack of deaconess representation in administrative councils. (See below.)

After Methodist unification in 1940 the responsibility for deaconess recruitment was vested in the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church.

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[1] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1916, pp. 671-72.

[2] 8m, WMC, 1917-18, pp. 160-62, 256-57, 365.

Since that time there has been an increase of (1) direct recruitment activity and (2) actions designed to make the diaconate more attractive to modern women.

One example of the former is the inauguration in 1951 of quadrennial national convocations of deaconesses, partly for the sake of fellowship and inspiration among the deaconesses, but also to interest the female youth of the church in deaconess careers.[1] Another example is the "U.S. -- 2" program, launched in 1950, which has invited college graduates to enlist for two years of service during which (after a summer of orientation) they were able to test themselves in typical deaconess work situations.[2] A third example is the sending of deaconess teams to colleges to present the claims of work for the church to student groups.[3]

The jurisdiction deaconess associations of the church, each made up largely of the deaconesses at work in the jurisdiction, have also been given the task of promoting deaconesses work in the Methodist *Discipline* of 1952 and following years.[4] A similar responsibility rests on the conference deaconess boards.[1] A motion picture and other devices are being used to present the deaconess vocation to women and youth.[2]

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[1] 11th, WDCS, 1950-51, p. 140.

[2] 12th. WDCS, 1951-52, p. 24.

[3] 19th, WDCS, 1958-59, pp. 3-4 (reprint).

[4] *Doctrine and Discipline of The Methodist Church*, (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1952), p. 315.

Examples of efforts to make deaconess work more attractive include improvement of the salary schedule and of the status of the deaconess in the church. These matters will be discussed below, under the appropriate rubrics.

II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

There was no change on this score throughout the period from 1918 to 1959. In 1918 the state law of Missouri required one year of high school before admission to nurse training of all candidates for the status of registered nurse. However the Evangelical Deaconess Hospital was already informing prospective students that it preferred that they be high school graduates.[3] The last Announcement published by the deaconess school, in 1953, asserted that candidates must have at least one year of high school for admission to non-professional curricula and a high school diploma as prerequisite for admission to professional study.[1] Nurse aptitude tests were announced as required of all nursing candidates beginning in 1943.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 315-16. [2] 20th, WDCS, 1959-60, p. 4 (reprint).

[3] Jens, op. cit., p. 19; Aufnahmebedingungen für Diakonissen, p. 7.

The new deaconess program brought into effect by the action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1959 required of all candidates who were to enter the diaconate thereafter that they have their professional training completed. The latter was defined as nursing education or three years of college or the equivalent, as a minimum.[3]

Mennonite Deaconesses

The older deaconess program, concentrating on producing first class nurses, required at least one year of high school of applicants, in keeping with the Kansas state requirements of those who would take the state board examinations.[4]

The current program looks to the recruitment of college women who will have had at least two years of college and will be encouraged to finish college.[5]

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[1] P. 13. [2] 53rd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1942, p. 11.

[3] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 154.

[4] The Mennonite, XXXVII, 48 (November 30, 1922),p. 2.

[5] Minutes of Ex. Com. of Committee on Women in Church Vocations, Newton, January 3, 1958, p. 1. Women in Church Vocations (Newton: Board of Christian Service, no date), pp. 3-4.

Episcopal Deaconesses

Admission in the case of the Episcopal deaconesses in 1918 was admission to the working diaconate, rather than to a motherhouse-training school. Canon 21 of 1916 specified that she had to be at least twenty-three years of age and a communicant in good standing. She had to present testimonials to her fitness for at least one of the types of responsibility of a deaconess from two priests and twelve lay communicants, six men and six women. It was the responsibility of the bishop of the diocese to satisfy himself that the candidate had had adequate religious and technical preparation for her work, which in any case must have covered two years. Nothing was said about the level of the two year training, or about the education prerequisite for it.[1]

In 1925 the age of admission was raised to twenty-five years. Further, the candidate was required to be a high school graduate or the equivalent as of the beginning of her two years of training.[2]

For a few years (1931-1934) the canon said nothing to the effect that the candidate for admission was required to be

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[1] The Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1916 (bound with the Journal of the General Convention of the same year), pp. 72-73. This source will be referred to in the footnotes as Const. and Can.

[2] Const. and Can., 1925, p. 82.

"unmarried or widowed."[1] However when the deaconesses objected, the original situation was restored.[2] In 1943 it began to be required that the candidate submit a medical certificate of her mental, nervous, and physical condition.[3]

A move to raise the requirement for admission to training to graduation from college, brought to the General Convention by the Commission on Deaconesses, failed to be adopted in 1949.[4]

Methodist Deaconesses

The Woman's Home Missionary Society was sending its candidates for the diaconate to its schools for home missionaries in 1918; there were eight such schools in various parts of the country. All required graduation from high school for admission.[5]

The institutions of the Methodist Deaconess Association included three deaconess training schools in addition to those operated by the Women's Home Missionary Society.[1] The Bethesda deaconess group concentrated on a hospital-based training, in stricter fidelity to the pattern of the German motherhouses;[2] their deaconesses were thus required to meet the state requirements of candidates for nursing as these were developed.

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[1] Const. and Can., 1931, p. 85.

[2] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1934, pp. 199-206, 483-84.

[3] Const. and Can., 1943, p. 126.

[4] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1949, p. 391; Const. and Can., 1949, p. 130.

[5] 38th, WHMS, 1918-19, pp. 172-73.

All three of these diaconates were also governed by the regulations of the General Deaconess Board and (after 1924) the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work. The deaconess board had established two kinds of admission standards that were in effect in 1918. A deaconess could be licensed after two years of study in a training school that taught the subjects prescribed by the board; or, if a graduate nurse, she could qualify for licensing if she passed examinations set by the board in Bible, church history, and the Methodist Discipline.[3]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pioneered a higher admission requirement for the diaconate. A candidate for deaconess work in 1918 had to have not only a high school diploma but two years of college or the equivalent, in order to be admitted to the two year training school course. Acceptable equivalents of two years of college were: graduation from an approved school of nursing; a diploma from an approved school for kindergarten teachers; graduation from an approved business college and two years of successful business experience; three years of study in an approved normal school; or four years of successful experience as a teacher. A general exception in favor of nurse-deaconess candidates was to the effect that they might take but one year in the training school, either before or after taking training for nursing in a Christian hospital.[1]

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[1] "Methodist Deaconess Association Training Schools," (1955, P. 2), MS in file of the Commission on Deaconess Work.

[2] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1912, pp. 1412-17.

[3] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1920, pp. 655-56.

With the unification of the three Methodist church bodies in 1939-1940, the five diaconates (counting that of the Methodist Protestant Church, which then had but one deaconess) were also brought under one administration, that of the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church. Within a few years admission requirements were brought to their present levels. Admission to the diaconate as a commissioned and licensed deaconess was made contingent on graduation from college and generally the completion of one or two years of graduate education. The principle was that the deaconess met the professional requirements of her special field of service.[2] In the case of teachers, certification by the state was required. Nurses could be admitted with status as registered nurses and two years of college. In all instances, at least one year of successful experience in an approved field had to precede the deaconess' consecration.[1]

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[1] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, pp. 379-80.

[2] 11th, WDCS, 1950-51, p. 136.

(In the case of the Lutheran diaconates, "admission" has meant admission both to the diaconate as a probationer and to a course of training that led to full deaconess status. In the present Methodist diaconate of women, admission to the first level of deaconess standing presupposes the *completion* of minimum educational requirements.)

III. INVESTITURE AND PROBATION

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The term "investiture" evidently did not occur in the usage of the St. Louis motherhouse, but probation was understood precisely as elsewhere within the Kaiserswerth tradition.[2] The period of probation in the earlier years was the four year period of formal deaconess-nurse education. In this period the student deaconess wore while on duty the ordinary uniform of the student nurse, as published pictures attest.[3] Under the reorganization ordered in 1959, the idea of probation has fallen away entirely.

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[1] 10th, WDCS, 1949-50, p. 66.

[2] Jens, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-24. [3] Ev. Deac. Soc., *passim*.

Mennonite Deaconesses

In the earlier period, the Bethel Deaconess Home took a thoroughly Kaiserswerthian approach in this as in every other matter. The "new program" of 1951 made no change at this point.

The current program has consciously and deliberately made a psychological break with the past, in the conviction that no moderate renovation of the diaconate could awaken fresh interest.[1] Accordingly these terms have disappeared.

Episcopal Deaconesses

The concept of "investiture" does not appear in the literature of the Episcopal deaconess work. Nor do the terms "probation" and "probationer." However the fuller canon on deaconesses adopted in 1925 provided for the first time that a woman might be acknowledged by a bishop as a "candidate for the office of deaconess." As such she was under the bishop's supervision and reported to him quarterly; the period of candidateship was usually two years in duration, at least half of which had to be spent in residence with deaconesses or at a church training school.[2]

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[1] Evident in the minutes of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, *passim*.

[2] *Const*. *and Can*., 1925, p. 82.

Methodist Deaconesses

Except for the Bethesda Deaconess Association, in the early years of the century, when the original German pattern was still being adhered to, investiture was not a part of the Methodist deaconess work.

The concept of probation was used in the earlier part of the period under study. The situation in the Methodist Episcopal Church was defined by the General Deaconess Board in 1918. A young woman who was admitted to a deaconess training school was accepted on probation; she remained a probationer for at least two years. If she entered on the basis of passing the board's examinations, she was also a probationer for at least two years before being consecrated.[1]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, also followed the practice of regarding the candidate as a probationer during her two years in the training school.[2] By the time of unification, however, the southern church was also requiring, prior to consecration, the completion of one year of successful service after schooling; but the term "probation" had disappeared.[3]

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[1] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1920, pp. 655-56.

[2] So, WMC, 1917-18, p. 380.

[3] Noreen D. Tatum, A Crown of Service (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1960), p. 324.

By 1950, under the Woman's Division of Christian Service, what had been the southern practice obtained for all Methodist deaconesses. The term "probation" was not used, but every deaconess was required to have had a year of practical experience in an approved field, as well as her professional education, before being consecrated.[1]

IV. CONSECRATION

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

In 1918 the consecration of the deaconess was conceived as in the Kaiserswerth tradition.[2] Throughout the period under study until 1959 it was administered, with the laying on of hands by pastors acting under the auspices of the deaconess society, at the end of the period of training as a deaconess-nurse.[3]

Under the reorganization of 1959, consecration was replaced by "commissioning," a term of wider reference in Evangelical and Reformed usage.[4] Commissioned workers included directors of religious education, parish workers, ministers of music, teachers in church-related schools, and medical and agricultural missionaries, as well as deaconesses.[1] More substantial and widespread church recognition was expected to accrue to the deaconesses through their being commissioned. The commissioning was performed in the name of a constituent synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

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[1] 10th, WDCS, 1949-50, p. 66.

[2] Jens, op. cit., pp. 24-28.

[3] 51st, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1941, p. 14.

[4] E & R Ch., 10th Meeting, 1956, p. 154.

Mennonite Deaconesses

In the earlier part of the period of this study, the term "ordination" was used most often in connection with the public induction of a deaconess. However the Mennonite Church is generally of a "low church" orientation, and no more was meant by the term "ordination," in connection with the deaconesses, than other traditions meant by "consecration." It was essentially an action by a private corporation, the deaconess society, though performed in a churchly setting.[2]

The current program, as part of its deliberate break with the past, has adopted the term "commissioning," in place of the term "ordination." Commissioning was envisioned as analogous to the ordination of the clergy; it was thought of as commending a candidate to a specific field of service and as marking the transition from student to worker with full status. It was thought of as done on the authority of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, in the name of the General Conference Mennonite Church.[1]

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[1] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 158.

[2] Conversation with Marvin H. Ewert, Newton, August 23/60.

Episcopal Deaconesses

The term "consecration" was not used in connection with the induction into office of Episcopal deaconesses. The induction or "admission" of a deaconess was performed by a bishop, who has been canonically required since 1925 to ascertain that the candidate has passed examinations set by his examiners in seven subject matter areas: Bible, church history, missions, doctrine, ministration, religious education, and social service. The candidate has also been required to have completed nine months of supervised field work or to have had other suitable work experience. She was then inducted, upon the recommendation of the Standing Committee of the diocese.[2] The canon has always required that the setting apart of the deaconess be performed in an appropriate religious service.[3] This has generally but not always included the imposition of hands (or hand).[4]

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[1] Minutes of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, Winnipeg, Manitoba, April 11, 1958, p. 2.

[2] Const. and Can., 1925, p. 82-85.

[3] Const. and Can., 1916, p. 73. [4] Yerkes, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

Methodist Deaconesses

Her admission to full status by the rite of consecration has at all times been a part of the Methodist concept of the deaconess. For deaconesses in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the General Deaconess Board had worked out the proper sequence as follows: a candidate who had completed her studies and had been assigned to a position was licensed as a deaconess by the conference deaconess board. This board was composed of all the licensed deaconesses of a conference, several district superintendents, and representatives of the conference Woman's Home Missionary Society and of the boards of institutions in the conference with deaconesses in their employ. Her being licensed to function as a deaconess entitled the candidate to consecration, which was performed by a bishop.[1]

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a similar procedure was followed. There was no conference deaconess board in the southern church. Instead, the Committee on Deaconess Work and City Missions of the Woman's Missionary Council assigned the candidate to a position; the Woman's Missionary Council licensed her, and she was then consecrated by a bishop.[2]

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[1] Gen. Conf. M.E. Ch., 1920, p. 656.

[2] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, p. 365.

In the united church the procedure was elaborated somewhat in 1948. After having satisfied all requirements the candidate was commissioned to function as a deaconess by a bishop acting in the name of the Board of Missions of the church; she was then given an appointment by the conference deaconess board, which also arranged for her consecration by the bishop of her home conference or of the conference in which she was at work. The licensing and consecration were performed together. The commissioning and licensing and consecration were thought of as together making the candidate a deaconess legally and officially. Both the commissioning and consecration were liturgical and had the character of public prayer for God's benediction on the newly-begun career of service.[1]

V. THE RELATION OF THE DEACONESS TO THE CHURCH

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The question was raised in the study of the diaconate reported to the Evangelical Deaconess Society in 1938 whether deaconesses were lay persons or members of the clergy.[2] It was felt that they had been permitted to fall between the two stools. If they were clergy, they ought to have had more recognitions and privileges for their pains; if they were lay persons, they ought to have had their rights more clearly secured in contractual relations with employing agencies. In 1947 the church's Commission on Benevolent Institutions expressed its concern that the deaconesses "be more definitely recognized by the Church."[1] In 1950 the General Synod ordered that the names of the consecrated deaconesses be listed in the Yearbook of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.[2]

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[1] Conversation with Miss Mary Lou Barnwell, January 4, 1961.

[2] 49th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1938, p. 9.

The church action of 1959 also addressed itself to the question of the relation of the deaconess to the church. The new plan secured a church-wide status for the deaconess as a church worker commissioned for a special ministry by a constituent synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. In effect this made her a member of a kind of lower order of the ministry of the church;[3] previously the deaconess had been consecrated by a private agency, the deaconess society, and the church as a whole did not have a clear understanding of what this consecration meant.

Mennonite Deaconesses

Under the older regime the deaconess was essentially a nurse working for a church hospital. She had no claim in anyone's judgment on clerical status.

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[1] E & R Ch., 7th Meeting, 1947, p. 280.

[2] E & R Ch., 8th Meeting, 1950, p. 112.

[3] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 158.

Under the current program there has been an intention to give the woman church worker a sense of her importance to the church as a church worker. However, in a church tradition that characteristically makes little of the special status and prerogatives of the clergy, there has been no interest in introducing discussion of the similarities of status between the clergy and the Women in Church Vocations. However the Committee on the Ministry of the General Conference Mennonite Church has been drawn into the discussion of the commissioning procedure.[1]

Episcopal Deaconesses

A number of terms have been used for the act of inducting a candidate into the office of Episcopal deaconess, reflecting the church interest on the one hand in avoiding the appearance of admitting the deaconess to the same clergy rights as the deacon enjoyed, and on the other hand in bringing an appropriate churchly dignity to the event. The canon of 1916 had the bishop "appoint" her.[2] This has drawn objection as sounding weak, as if an "appointment" necessarily conveyed a temporary office.[1] The current canon speaks of her being "appointed" a deaconess, "set apart" as a deaconess, "admitted" a deaconess.[2]

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[1] Minutes of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, Chicago, November 2, 1957, p. 3; and Winnipeg, April 11, 1958, p. 2.

[2] Const. and Can., 1916, p. 72.

At issue here is the question of the relation of the deaconess to the church, that is to say whether she is a member of the clergy, which in the Anglican Church includes three orders: deacon, priest, and bishop. In 1922 the Joint Commission on Deaconesses endorsed the finding of the Lambeth Conference of 1920 to the effect that a deaconess was ordained to holy orders with permanent status and might, but needed not to, adopt a vow of celibacy: she dedicated herself to a life-long service in any case.[3] However the General Convention refused to concur in the deaconess resolutions of Lambeth, 1920.[4] In 1931 the General Convention was willing to adopt Resolution 67 of the 1930 Lambeth Conference:

> That the Order of Deaconess is for women the one and only Order of Ministry which we can recommend our Branch of the Catholic Church to recognize and use.[5]

On the other hand this was not to be taken as capitulating to the view that deaconesses were members of the clergy, as can be seen in that the next General Convention made a verbal amendment in the part of the canon that spoke of the deaconess as "canonically resident," in such a way as to make it clear that a deaconess was not considered as of the number of the clergy (who alone can be canonically resident).[1] The deaths of deaconesses were being reported to the church at about the same time under "Lay Necrology."[2] It is also true that the kinds of work deaconesses were authorized to do, as will be seen below, hardly if at all went beyond what lay members of the Episcopal Church were authorized to do.[3]

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[1] Truesdell, Does the Church Want Deaconesses?, p. 13.

[2] Const. and Can., 1949, p. 132.

[3] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1922, p. 674. [4] Ibid., p. 90.

[5] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1922, p. 674.

It has been suggested that an important ingredient in the unwillingness to regard deaconesses as equivalent to deacons was the fear that the acknowledgement of ordained female deacons would pave the way for female priests. This was based on the observation that in the Episcopal Church the office of deacon is regarded in most instances as merely a stage, to be left as rapidly as possible, in becoming a priest.[4]

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[1] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1934, p. 484; Const. and Can., 1934, p. 87.

[2] Living Church Annual (New York and Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing Co., 1936), p. 455.

[3] Bacon, loc. cit.

[4] Truesdell, Does the Church Want Deaconesses?, pp. 6, 12.

Methodist Deaconesses

In all three former Methodist church bodies the diaconate had the distinction of being the one office for women in the church that was the subject of legislation in the *Discipline*. However this is not to say that the deaconess was a member of the clergy.

In the united church there has been some deliberate improvement of the status of the deaconess. Although she is still not considered to be a member of the clergy, she has been given privileges that do not belong as a matter of course to the laity of The Methodist Church. A kind of half-way house between laity and clergy has been fashioned for the deaconess that is particularly visible in the following items: she is a member of the official board, along with the minister, in the church in which she has her membership; she is a member of the quarterly conference, the church's official meeting for business; and she is seated with a voice, although without vote, in the annual conference, the members of which are the clergy and the official lay delegates of the congregations.[1]

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[1] 12a, WDCS, 1951-52, pp. 94-95.

EATON'S CORRASABLE BOND

CHAPTER XIX

CHANGES IN THE OTHER PROTESTANT DIACONATES OF WOMEN

(II)

The description of the changes since 1918 in the other Protestant diaconates of women is continued with a discussion of deaconess vows.

I. VOWS

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

Unlike the other Kaiserswerth diaconates, the deaconess institution in St. Louis did not shrink throughout most of its history from the use of the term "vow." The deaconess was said to have made a "promise or vow" of "obedience, willingness, and faithfulness to God and the motherhouse" in the course of her consecration.[1] However the substance of the matter was not different from what it was in the other Kaiserswerthian motherhouses.[2] The deaconess was supposed to have decided before getting to consecration to "choose the deaconess work as her life-work."[3] On the other hand, the acceptance of an opportunity to marry or of some other vocation was not ruled out, and the deaconess was also said to have promised "nothing else than what she is already in duty bound to perform as a Christian according to her baptismal vow."[1]

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[1] Jens, op. cit., p. 29. [2] Ibid., pp. 24-33. [3] Ibid., p. 24.

The reorganization plan of 1959 at no point speaks in terms of vows. On the subject of marriage it says, "The Deaconess may continue her status when married if doing full-time service."[2]

Mennonite Deaconesses

As in the Kaiserswerth motherhouses generally, the deaconess candidate in Newton made no other promise than to be obedient to the directions of her motherhouse so long as she was in its care. However the negative attitude toward marriage that existed in the expectations directed toward deaconesses in many places was present here, too, in its subtly powerful way.

Under the "new program" of 1951 an intention to "clarify" the vow was expressed. It was desired not to cast aspersions on marriage and at the same time not to lose too many deaconesses to it.[3]

The current program began with an outspokenly positive attitude toward marriage. Marriage was not to affect a woman's status in the Women in Church Vocations, so long as she continued to be able to accept a full-time position with a church agency.[1] However the Women in Church Vocations committee has already experienced the disappointment of discovering that some of the public attitudes toward the diaconate have attached themselves to the Women in Church Vocations, with the consequence that young women have shied away from the program as being marked for "single women" or for women advertizing themselves as without connections and consequently available.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 28-29. [2] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 154.

[3] ISK, X, 2 (April, 1951), p. 7.

Episcopal Deaconesses

The Episcopal "deaconess vows to 'endeavor faithfully to fulfill the duties of her office' and to obey her Bishop and 'those over her in the Lord.'"[3] From the beginning it was strongly hoped and suggested that the deaconess calling was to a "life-long service."[4] However the deaconess was not required to adopt a vow of celibacy. On the other hand, according to the canon of

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[1] "Envisioning a New 'Deaconess' Program for the General Conference," memorandum by Elmer Ediger and Ernst Harder, September, 1954, p. 1. Also, Women in Church Vocations, (Newton: Board of Christian Service, no date), p. 7.

[2] Minutes, Ex. Com., Committee on Women in Church Vocations, Newton, June 7, 1960, p. 2.

[3] Women of the Church, (Evanston: Central House for Deaconesses, no date), folder, p. 2.

[4] Ibid.

1916, "Such appointment [as a deaconess] shall be vacated by marriage."[1]

There was a change in the wording of this canonical sentence in 1928, so that it read, "A Deaconess who marries shall not continue to exercise her office."[2] This seemed to echo the view of Lambeth that the deaconess enjoyed ordination to holy orders, with the effect that marriage could not nullify her status, but that at worst the church might bar her from exercising her privileges. The Commission on Adapting the Office of Deaconess to the Present Tasks of the Church urged the General Convention to go further and drop the sentence entirely, along with the admission requirement that the candidate be "unmarried or widow."[3] That would have meant that marriage had no canonical effect on either the deaconess' status or her freedom to work as a deaconess. The General Convention was willing to adopt this recommendation and did so.[4] However when the deaconesses themselves protested, the excluded phrases were brought back in their original form, and celibacy was required again of candidates and deaconesses, as it is to the present time.[1]

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[1] Const. and Can., 1916, p. 72.

[2] Const. and Can., 1928, p. 83.

[3] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1931, p. 41.

[4] Const. and Can., 1931, p. 85.

Methodist Deaconesses

The Methodist deaconess was never expected to make any vows. However in all the separate diaconates, prior to unification, she was required to be single (unmarried or widowed) to enter the diaconate, and she could not remain a deaconess if she married.

In the present diaconate since 1950, marriage is no longer considered to be incompatible with the performance of the work of a deaconess. The deaconess may retain her standing as long as she is available to accept full-time appointments in Methodist church work.[2]

With regard to obedience, the original canon on the deaconess in 1888 asserted the deaconess' duty of being subordinate to and directed by the superintendent of the deaconess home;[3] however this approach to personnel management was disappearing as the era of this study began.

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[1] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1934, pp. 199-206, 483-84; Const. and Can., 1934, p. 87.

[2] Do You Know the Answers? (New York: Commission on Deaconess Work, Woman's Division of Christian Service, 1956), pamphlet, p. 5.

[3] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1888, p. 436.

II. REMUNERATION

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The St. Louis deaconess was a dependent of her motherhouse and received full maintenance and medical care for life, once she was consecrated, as well as the monthly allowance in cash that was begun with her formal admission and was increased each year until consecration and full allowance were attained. She also received a month of vacation each year.[1]

The new plan of 1959 called for salaries for deaconesses in the future and specified that they must be the salaries to which the deaconesses were entitled by their professional standings. The deaconesses were thereupon to become responsible for their own maintenance and lifetime care.[2]

Mennonite Deaconesses

In the earlier period and through 1948, the Mennonite deaconesses were living on the cooperative economic plan, with monthly allowance, annual vacation, and lifetime care.[3] No change was made in 1951.

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[1] 38th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1928, pp. 19, 21.

[2] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 154.

[3] Mennonite Life, III, 1 (January, 1948), p. 33.

The Women in Church Vocations plan of 1956 included the provision that women workers were to receive salaries from the employing agencies, "with such minimums as the committee may suggest."[1] The supervisory committee was also required to see to it that the women who had enrolled were provided with arrangements for retirement and health insurance.[2]

Episcopal Deaconesses

The canons do not make any determinations with regard to remuneration of deaconesses. Deaconesses have been on salary and responsible for their own expenses throughout the period of this study. There is more than a hint in the literature that the salaries have been unfairly low, as if it had been expected that deaconesses, like ambassadors, would be independently wealthy, or as if employers had inferred from the deaconess commitment and the religious garb that deaconesses ought not to be compensated as well as other persons, or indeed, with more than bare subsistence.[3]

The provisions for deaconess retirement have been similar to the salaries. Up to 1926 there was no general provision for deaconess retirements except a small emergency fund of the National Conference of Deaconesses. When the Church Pension Fund for the clergy was reported to be unable to provide for deaconesses, the National Conference organized the Retiring Fund for Deaconesses of the Peotestant Episcopal Church in 1927. The fund has been recommended by the General Convention to the generosity of individual donors, but the church itself has not contributed, and the fund remains small, as do its annuities, granted only to retired and disabled deaconesses who are in need.[1]

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[1] "Program and Fellowship of Women in the Ministry of the Church," recommendations of the Board of Christian Service adopted by the General Conference, August, 1956, p. 2.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] Truesdell, *Does the Church Want Deaconesses?*, p. 13.

Methodist Deaconesses

The deaconesses who functioned under the aegis of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church continued almost entirely to be on the allowance plan up to the time of the church merger in 1939-1940.[2] They were reported to have expressed themselves in response to a questionnaire as preferring to retain the allowance system following unification.[3] It went with the allowance system that the Woman's Home Missionary Society also promised lifetime care to retired deaconesses who had served at least eight years.[1]

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[1] A History of the Retiring Fund for Deaconesses, (New York: The Retiring Fund, [1940]) pamphlet, pp. 1-12; Truesdell, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

[2] Steiner, op. cit., p. 5. [3] 57th, WHMS, 1937-38, p. 138.

The deaconesses of the Methodist Deaconess Association were also on the allowance plan. A major contribution of the association was to administer various endowments as relief and pension funds for the deaconesses.[2] In 1924 the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work consolidated and undertook to administer all the deaconess pension funds of the northern church.[3]

Most of the allowances ranged from twenty-five to thirty-five dollars per month in 1939.[4]

The deaconesses of the southern church began on the allowance system. The amount was twenty-five dollars per month in 1918; there was also provision of an annual vacation of one month and of a sabbatical leave of three months after seven years;[5] this was changed to a leave of a full year in the seventh year, beginning in 1929, to be used for study and rest.[1] As early as 1920 a minimum annual salary of $900 has been established, in addition to full room, board, and travel expense.[2]

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[1] 38th, WHMS, 1918-19, p. 246.

[2] "The Methodist Deaconess Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church," pp. 1-4.

[3] Steiner, op. cit., p. 6.

[4] 20th, WDCS, 1959-60, reprint, p. 7.

[5] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, pp. 381-82.

Although the southern deaconesses were very much in the minority, their principle prevailed after the church unification. Beginning in 1950 the minimum standard salary for all deaconesses was $100 per month in addition to full maintenance, that is, room, board, flat laundry, and utilities.[3] In 1952 it was reported that only a few deaconesses were being paid less than the standard.[4] The most recent salary action of the Commission on Deaconess Work has been to request consideration by employers of the deaconess' academic training, her work experience, the responsibilities of her position, the salaries paid comparable workers, and the cost of living in the area. On this basis a starting salary of $3000 to $3600 was proposed for the deaconess with a bachelor's degree but without experience, and of $3300 to $3900 for the deaconess with additional academic background. Annual increments of $120 were also proposed. For deaconesses in administrative positions $4200 salary and an annual increment of

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[1] 19th, WMC, 1928-29, p. 132.

[2] 10th, WMC, 1919-20, Part II, p. 167.

[3] 10th WDCS, 1949-50, p. 70.

[4] 12th, WDCS, 1951-52, 1952-53, p. 96.

$200 were suggested.[1]

The practice of giving every deaconess a sabbatical leave (nine months for study and three months for rest every seventh year) has also been established in principle for all deaconesses of the church.[2]

Since 1940 the Woman's Division of Christian Service has been administering a contributory pension fund for all Methodist deaconesses.[3] The retired deaconesses may live in deaconess rest and retirement homes if they wish.[4]

III. GARB OR UNIFORM, AND TITLE

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The garb in 1918 was a long-sleeved, long-skirted, dark costume, and wearing it was a deaconess obligation, as it was throughout the range of the Kaiserswerth influence.[5] In 1919 already the deaconesses laid aside the garb, when off duty, for street clothes of their own choice.[1] On duty they wore conventional white nurse uniforms and caps.[2] In 1952 the deaconesses adopted a dress uniform comprising a navy blue suit with white collar and a plain navy blue hat, to be worn when representing the sisterhood publicly.[3] With liberty and modernity already achieved in this matter, the reorganization plan of 1959 had nothing to say about the garb.

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[1] 20m, WDCS, 1959-60, reprint, p. 8. [2] *Ibid*., p. 7.

[3] *Doctrine and Discipline of The Methodist Church*, 1952, p. 314.

[4] *The Methodist Deaconess* (New York: Commission on Deaconess Work, 1956), folder, p. 1.

[5] Jens, *op*. *cit*., pp. 37-38.

The deaconesses have been addressed and referred to as "Sister" throughout the history of the St. Louis motherhouse. The church action of 1959 has indicated that this title need not be used for the deaconesses of the future. They will be addressed as "Miss" or "Mrs." and referred to in the same way with the title, "Deaconess," following the name.[4]

Mennonite Deaconesses

As indicated above, the garb was maintained in a conservative way through 1948. The new deaconess program of 1951 called for a modification of the garb design and for the freedom of deaconesses to choose between the new and the old, and a more modern garb was designed.[1]

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[1] *Ministers of Mercy*, (reprint), p. 4.

[2] 41st, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1930, p. 24 and *passim*.

[3] *Ministers of Mercy*, p. 4.

[4] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 156.

The current program has abandoned the garb, but has kept the question open in view of the possibility that the young women now being recruited will wish to have a uniform.[2]

The title "Sister" is used among the older deaconesses, as it has been from the beginning. The young women who were consultants in the working out of the current program wanted to abandon the term "deaconess."[3] Neither term, "Sister" nor "deaconess," is used in the new program, Women in Church Vocations. The expression "WCV-er" is used frequently.[4]

Episcopal Deaconesses

The canon of deaconesses has not required a garb, and therefore the bishops are free to release any deaconesses in their dioceses from the necessity of wearing it. The National Conference of Deaconesses has been free to urge abandoning it. Nevertheless the Episcopal deaconesses have preferred to retain it, and in a rather conservative fashion. The dress is plain black, blue, or grey, with long sleeves and white collar and cuffs. There is a white starched cap, and a veil for outdoor wear, and a silver cross is worn. In 1958 the Advisory Commission proposed that the deaconesses consider modernizing the garb,[1] but no action has been taken by the deaconesses.

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[1] ISK, X, 1 (February-March, 1951), p. 7.

[2] "Envisioning a New 'Deaconess' Program for the General Conference," p. 2.

[3] "What These Girls Recommended," memorandum of the Committee of Women in Church Vocations, [1956], p. 2.

[4] "Women in Church Vocations," folder, *passim*.

The Episcopal deaconesses have not usually been called "Sister." The form they have suggested throughout the period since 1918, in the second and third persons, is "Deaconess Smith" and "Deaconess Mary A. Smith."

Methodist Deaconesses

The garb was a standard feature of the Methodist diaconates in the early years. It was required of deaconesses in the by-laws of the Woman's Home Missionary Society.[2] In 1938 the deaconesses connected with the society were reported to have indicated a wish to retain it.[3] The Woman's Missionary Council required the wearing of the garb by the deaconess while on duty in 1918, but made it optional as early as 1924.[4]

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[1] The Deaconess, 1958 (annual issue), pp. 4-5.

[2] 52nd, WHMS, 1932-33, p. 137.

[3] 57th, WHMS, 1937-38, p. 138.

[4] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, p. 382; 14th, 1923-24, p. 167-68.

Once again the southern practice was followed by the unified diaconate, and after 1940, although a style of uniform was prescribed, the question of when or whether to wear it was left to the discretion of every individual deaconess. Since 1952 no garb style has been prescribed.[1]

With the exception of the deaconesses of the German Methodist conferences, the title "Sister" was not current at any time. Methodist usage has been to refer to the deaconess as "Deaconess Mary Smith" and "Deaconess Smith." More recently in the united church it is becoming the custom to refer to her formally as "Miss (or Mrs.) Mary Smith, Deaconess."[2]

IV. SEPARATION

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

In the earlier period both the motherhouse and the deaconess were expected to give three months notice of dismissal or withdrawal. However the motherhouse reserved the right to expel the deaconess at once for "gross sins."[3]

The plan of 1959 evidently took for granted the right of the deaconess to withdraw at any time. It did provide for a maximum of three consecutive one year leaves of absence. After three years the deaconess was considered to have resigned as a commissioned worker.[1]

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[1] Conversation with Miss Mary Lou Barnwell, Jan. 4/61.

[2] *Ibid*. [3] 40th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1928, p. 24.

The provision for payment of one year of tuition by the deaconess for every year by which she was short of serving four years as a deaconess, which had been instituted in 1941,[2] became a dead letter with the provision in the action of 1959 that each deaconess candidate was responsible for financing her own education.[3]

Mennonite Deaconesses

Under the older program the hope was expressed, as in the case of all the Kaiserswerth diaconates, that each enrolment was for life.

Under the new program of 1951 it was resolved to introduce a five-year enlistment, in the hope that this would meet the objections of women who were put off by the idea of an unlimited commitment. Those who enlisted for five years were to be called "associate deaconesses," but there is no evidence that any ever volunteered. The same plan proposed setting up a still shorter enlistment, of one to three years, but it is not in the record that anything came of it.[1]

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[1] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 154.

[2] 52nd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1941, p. 17.

[3] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 154.

In the current program the applicant makes no commitment, implied or otherwise, to remain any particular length of time. However, if she accepts a scholarship, she is expected to work one year for each $200 of aid accepted, or to repay whatever part of the scholarship is not being cancelled at this rate by service rendered.[2]

Episcopal Deaconesses

The canons have said throughout the period of this study that the deaconess was free to resign her office at any time. In 1916 it was provided that she might not be suspended or removed from office except by the bishop for cause, and then she had the right of a hearing before the bishop and the Standing Committee.[3] Since 1925 she has had the right, in case of suspension or removal, to be tried by a special court.[4]

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[1] ISK, X, 2 (April, 1951), p. 5.

[2] "Women in Church Vocations," pp. 6-7.

[3] Const. and Can., 1916, p. 73.

[4] Const. and Can., 1925, pp. 84-85.

Methodist Deaconesses

There seems to have been no variation and no change in any of the Methodist diaconates from the original regulation that the deaconess was free to retire from the service at any time, provided that she gave three months notice of her intention to resign.[1] It was also generally true that her appointment to a specific position expired and had to be renewed annually; if she was not suitable for deaconess work, she was not reappointed to a position. A deaconess who had been given financial help with her education was expected to give two years of service as a deaconess for each year of aid.[2]

V. THE ROLE OF THE MOTHERHOUSE

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The motherhouse and its organization were conceived in St. Louis in 1918 in entirely Kaiserswerthian terms.[3]

Without saying it in so many words, the reorganization plan of 1959 eliminated the motherhouse by redistributing its functions as school, church, and home.

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[1] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, p. 380.

[2] 38th, WHMS, 1918-19, p. 246; 8th, WMC, 1917-18, p. 381.

[3] Jens, *op*. *cit*., pp. 33-37.

As recently as 1950 the Evangelical and Reformed Church had authorized the organization of deaconess congregations within recognized deaconess sisterhoods of the church; the move was connected with the desire to give the deaconesses further recognition in the church.[1] In 1953 the "Deaconess Evangelical and Reformed Church" at the St. Louis motherhouse had received the specific permission of the church at large to be the first such congregation.[2] However this kind of development was implied not to be necessary to the proper recognition of the deaconess by the church in the church action of 1959; her status was then declared to be secured through her being commissioned by a synod.[3]

The responsibility for placement counseling under the new plan was assigned (along with that for recruitment) to the Committee on Deaconess Service of the church.[4]

Mennonite Deaconesses

The motherhouse structure in the earlier years at Newton was generally in the Kaiserswerth tradition. There were years when there was no pastor-superintendent, as in 1908-1914[5] and

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[1] E & R Ch., 8th Meeting, 1950, pp. 119, 122-23.

[2] E & R Ch., 9th Meeting, 1953, p. 306.

[3] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 156. [4] Ibid., p. 155.

[5] The Mennonite, XXXVI, 20 (May 19, 1921), p. 1.

1921-1929 and 1932-1954,[1] but the concept of the office was entirely traditional.[2] Evidently the absence of a pastor was felt to be a deprivation at the time of the new deaconess program of 1951, for the society determined to call a young pastor to be "director" of the deaconess program and chaplain of the hospital.[3]

The plan of 1951 also provided that the individual deaconess have more to say in regard to her placement, even to the extent of making it possible for the deaconess to work for agencies of other churches, if the Mennonite Church had no program of the kind the deaconess wanted to work in; the only proviso was that the agency would accept the contract requirements of the motherhouse in the matter of fees, expenses, vacation, and other such matters.[4]

The motherhouse, headed now by the directing sister and with the hospital chaplain as pastor, will continue to function for the deaconesses who entered before the current reconstruction was begun, but the new plan calls for no motherhouse at all. The task of counseling the Women in Church Vocations and of assisting them in finding suitable placements and in other ways has been assigned under the new order to the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, which is answerable to the Board of Christian Service, an administrative unit of the General Conférence.[1]

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[1] ISK, XVI, 3 (May-June, 1953), pp. 7, 10.

[2] The Mennonite, XXXIV, 24, (June 12, 1919), p. 2.

[3] ISK, X, 1 (February-March, 1951), p. 5. [4] Ibid., p. 6.

Episcopal Deaconesses

The term and notion of "motherhouse" have not been present in the deaconess work of the Episcopal Church. The role of the motherhouse as the deaconess training school has been filled from the start by the church training schools, some of which were founded primarily for deaconess training, but all of which were intended for the education of church workers and missionaries generally.[2]

The schools also served as the placement agencies for the deaconesses, in the absence of any provision in the canon other that that the bishop had to approve every appointment in writing.[3]

The function of the motherhouse as a retirement and rest home has been performed for some deaconesses by various institutional homes for the aged that deaconesses have founded or managed. The Central House for Deaconesses, established in 1953, when all the other training schools had closed or ceased to provide particularly for deaconesses, combines the functions of school, residence for deaconesses at school, deaconess office headquarters, and rest home.[1] The deaconess-in-charge is simultaneously the executive secretary of the National Conference of Deaconesses.[2] There are modest charges at the house for room, board, and tuition, and scholarships are available.[3]

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[1] "Women in Church Vocations," pp. 6,9.

[2] Truesdell, The Deaconess Office and Ministry, p. 27.

[3] Const. and Can., 1916, pp. 72-73.

It is somewhat reminiscent of one more aspect of the motherhouse that the canon of deaconesses has included since 1958 the provision that the deaconess is to report annually to the bishop of her diocese.[4] This provision gives the deaconess access for her defense to a highly-placed advocate and also subjects her to a fatherly authority.

Methodist Deaconesses

Except in the case of the Bethesda deaconess motherhouse in Cincinnati, the term and notion of "motherhouse" were never current in the Methodist diaconates. Instead, the deaconess home was simply the common residence favored when two or more deaconesses were at work in the same city or neighborhood. As the deaconess family in such a home grew, a superintendent was installed, always a woman, usually a deaconess, whose work it was to administer the household and direct the work. In numerous instances of city mission work the deaconess home became a center in which many of the program activities took place: girls' clubs, mothers' clubs, classes in sewing and other domestic arts, lending libraries, kindergartens, nurseries, and even clinics. Many deaconess homes thus developed into settlement houses. In other instances the deaconess home developed into a home for aged persons, or children, or working girls. In contrast with the classical German motherhouse, the Methodist deaconess home was not a school, or a parish, or the authoritarian home that the motherhouse was.[1]

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[1] The Central House for Deaconesses, (Sycamore, Illinois: 1954), p. 2.

[2] "A Deaconess Letter," October 29, 1953, pp. 6, 11.

[3] The Central House for Deaconesses, p. 2.

[4] Const. and Can., 1958, p. 137.

The placement of Methodist deaconesses has always been handled by the various diaconate administrations, rather than by the deaconess homes. However, some deaconesses have taken advantage of the deaconess homes as places where they were welcome to live out their retirements.

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[1] 4th, WDCS, 1943-44, p. 98; 5th, WDCS, 1944-45, p. 40.

VI. THE ROLE OF THE SISTERHOOD

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The sisterhood was conceived in conventional terms in St. Louis throughout the earlier part of the period of this study. The first important gain of status by the sisterhood came with the report of the study committee of 1938. At that time the board of directors of the deaconess society was urged to give the sisterhood, through representation of its own choosing, a voice and a vote in the administration of the hospital, to recognize the sisters' council and to consult it on matters in which deaconesses were concerned, and to have at least one joint meeting with the sisters' council in order to work out together arrangements that might make the deaconess life and work more enjoyable.[1]

With the virtual elimination of the motherhouse by the church action of 1959, it became necessary to provide another structure for fostering the sisterhood; a Deaconess Association was proposed for this purpose.[2] The association was conceived as offering sustaining comradeship to the deaconess through its annual meetings and through regional and local fellowships, sponsored by the association, that would meet more frequently.

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[1] 49th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1938, p. 9.

[2] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, pp. 155-56.

Mennonite Deaconesses

The Bethel deaconesses were working with the classical conception of the sisterhood in 1918, and nothing seems to have changed in this respect.

The current program of Women in Church Vocations has faced the need for devices other than the motherhouse with which to provide a sheltering structure within which a new sisterhood may develop. To date it has been hoped that the sisterhood will find support in the fellowship of studying together one year at the theological seminary, in an annual two or three day conference, and in the regular newsletter of the promotional secretary.[1]

Episcopal Deaconesses

There was no stress on the concept of the sisterhood of the deaconesses in the period under study. The National Conference of Deaconesses has been an instrument of sisterhood. In existence since the beginning of the period under study, the conference has had as its first purpose to unite the deaconesses in closer fellowship.[2] It has pursued this purpose through its newsletter, The Deaconess, and its meetings.

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[1] "Women in Church Vocations," pp. 5,7.

[2] The Deaconess, December, 1955, p. 15.

The deaconesses of the diocese of Alabama, the earliest deaconess organization established by an American bishop, and the deaconesses of St. Clare's House, a retreat and rest home in Red Hook, New York, considered themselves to be "communities" somewhat on the monastic style without professing any conventional rule, but they were exceptional in this respect among the Episcopal deaconesses.[1]

Methodist Deaconesses

The term "sisterhood" was not used in connection with the Methodist deaconesses. Fellowship with other deaconesses was provided for each deaconess in a number of possible ways. If she lived in a deaconess home, she functioned in a team relationship with the other resident deaconesses. She met with other deaconesses annually as a member of the conference deaconess board and jurisdiction deaconess association. Since 1951 she has also participated in the quadrennial national deaconess convocation.

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[1] Living Church Annual, (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1948), p. 148.

CHAPTER XX

CHANGES IN THE OTHER PROTESTANT DIACONATES OF WOMEN

(III)

The account of the changes since 1918 in the diaconates of women of the other Protestant communions continues with a consideration of the role of the diaconate in the life of the church.

I. THE ROLE OF THE DIACONATE, ITS GOVERNMENT AND MEANS OF SUPPORT

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The Evangelical Deaconess Society of St. Louis has always been a private corporation composed of members of Evangelical and Reformed congregations. It has financed its hospital work and provided for its deaconesses through the income earned by the hospital and the stations and through the dues, legacies, and gifts solicited from members, friends, and congregations.[1] The Evangelical and Reformed Church as such has not allocated any of its funds to the hospital or to the care of the deaconesses. The hospital and deaconess work have been recognized, however, as related to the church, particularly through membership in the

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[1] Ev. Deac. Soc., *passim*.

Commission on Benevolent Institutions (since 1959, the Commission on Health and Welfare Services).

While leaving the Evangelical Deaconess Hospital as independent as ever, the church action of 1959 asserted the church's sense of responsibility for the character and well-being of the female diaconate. This kind of action has two aspects. On the one hand, the church paid its respects to the diaconate by opening the way to greater recognition of deaconesses and more prestige for them throughout the church, in connection with their being commissioned. On the other hand, the church also asserted its claim on and authority over the diaconate by imposing from above what was essentially a new definition of deaconess. Deaconesses were no longer the creatures of a private corporation of church members. They were now to be officially recognized staff officers of the church itself.[1]

Mennonite Deaconesses

The Mennonite diaconate, like many others, began as a private enterprise within the church membership. Individuals, societies, congregations, and conferences were invited to become members of the society by making contributions of fifty dollars;

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[1] See the church action, E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, pp. 153-56.

an additional vote was given for each additional fifty dollars.[1] The society was represented in the oversight of the institution by a board of directors elected at the annual meeting. The hospital and (after 1926) home for the aged have subsisted on their fees and on the gifts and legacies solicited by the society and its women's auxiliaries in the church and community.[2]

In 1956 the constitution was modified to give the Mennonite congregations in the area a larger influence in the affairs of the society. A request for "closer church and conference relationship and cooperation" on the part of the deaconess enterprise had been made by the General Conference of the church in 1950.[3]

The current Women in Church Vocations program represents not only a renovation of the diaconate, but the expression of a keen interest in the diaconate and a sense of responsibility for it on the part of the organized church.[4] It is also part of the picture that the Bethel Deaconess Society had felt the need of asking the organized church, in the person of its Board of Christian Service, to "accept [the] responsibility of sponsoring and encouraging deaconess work."[1] The current program of Women in Church Vocations is directed by a committee that is responsible to the Board of Christian Service.[2]

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[1] ISK, II, 3 (March, 1943), p. 10.

[2] ISK, XVI, 3 (May-June, 1958), pp. 4-12.

[3] ISK, IX, 5 (November-December, 1950), p. 12.

[4] ISK, XII, 1 (January-February, 1954), p. 4.

Episcopal Deaconesses

The deaconess work of the Episcopal Church is a blend of the official and unofficial. The existence of the canon defining the deaconess office, the numerous revisions of the canon, the existence of special and regular commissions of the General Convention with the responsibility of concerning themselves about the deaconesses, suggest that the deaconess work is a characteristic feature of the church. Yet the decentralization of the Episcopal Church in regional dioceses and the non-existence of any strong national church office in any sense responsible for the national promotion of deaconess work and of the well-being of deaconesses has given the deaconess movement an aspect of the non-essential. The canons have defined the female diaconate; they have not succeeded in giving it power. This is the fact in spite of the obviously friendly intentions of a succession of commissions on deaconess work.[3]

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[1] ISK, XI, 1 (January-February, 1952), p. 5.

[2] "Women in Church Vocations," pp. 1-2.

[3] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1922, p. 675.

Methodist Deaconesses

The Methodist deaconesses have from the beginning been the most church-related of all the American deaconesses. Some deaconesses worked for institutions governed by independent boards, as did the deaconesses of the Bethesda Association and of the Methodist Deaconess Association; but even these deaconesses were the concern and responsibility of the General Deaconess Board and its successor, the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work. These boards administered the regulations pertaining to deaconess educational standards and deaconess rights that were enacted by the General Conference and appeared in the Methodist *Discipline*.[1] The deaconess establishments administered by the Woman's Home Missionary Society and the Woman's Missionary Council were as such operated by components of the official church structure. This motif has come to heightened expression in the legislation of 1952, discussed above, through which the deaconesses have become somewhat like a special order of clergy, with less that full clergy rights, but with partial clergy rights, such as being seated *ex officio* with voice though without vote in the annual conference.

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[1] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1916, pp. 671-72.

II. WORK DONE BY DEACONESSES

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

The work of the Evangelical Deaconesses has been altogether in the health and welfare field. Even the parish work, into which only a few deaconesses entered, was usually described as visiting nurse and social work, rather than as educational work.[1] As the various specializations in hospital service have developed their own professional requirements, as for example those of x-ray technology, laboratory technology, physical therapy, medical social work, and various others, the Evangelical deaconesses have met the higher standards. Special efforts were characteristically made also to provide selected deaconesses with the necessary university training to enable them to teach student nurses and to be in charge of the various hospital departments.[2] Meanwhile, a far smaller number of other deaconesses, with less educational background, have been prepared for various non-professional services, in the administrative offices, in housekeeping, and as assistants to professional workers.[3]

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[1] Jens, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-86; 41st, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1930, pp. 29-30.

[2] 53rd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1942, p. 6.

[3] *Announcement*, (St. Louis: Evangelical Deaconess Hospital, 1953), pp. 16-23.

When the recommendations of the church's study committee were adopted in 1959, the historic general identification of Evangelical deaconesses with health and welfare services was made mandatory and exclusive. It was also determined that only women who could qualify to serve professionally in health and welfare services would be commissioned as deaconesses.[1]

Mennonite Deaconesses

All the work of the older Bethel diaconate has been nursing and other health and welfare work. Besides working as nurses, selected deaconesses as early as 1911 began to serve the hospital as laboratory and x-ray technicians and have continued to do so.[2] In 1916 the services of one sister were presented to the town of Newton in her capacity as a visiting nurse.[3] Deaconesses also qualified as instructors in nursing and director of nursing at Bethel Hospital.[4] Still others, who were not professional nurses, worked in the hospital kitchen, laundry, and business office and in the home for the aged.[5] One was school nurse at Bethel

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[1] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, pp. 153, 155.

[2] *Silver Anniversary Memorial*, pp. 25-26. [3] *Ibid*., p. 27.

[4] *Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital*, p. 15; *Mennonite Life*, III, 1 (January, 1948), p. 35.

[5] *Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital*, pp. 23, 24; *ISK*, XVI, 3 (May-June, 1958), pp. 6, 13-14.

College.[1]

With the reorganization that is now in progress, an attempt is being made to recruit women workers for the whole gamut of positions in church-related agencies of all kinds: as writers of Sunday School literature, as parish workers, as counselors and teachers in parish and higher schools at home and abroad, as well as for positions as nurses and other personnel for health and welfare institutions.[2] Some diversification has been achieved.[3]

Episcopal Deaconesses

The canon of 1916 defined the duty of the deaconess as "to assist the minister in the care of the poor and sick, the religious training of the young and others, and the work of moral reformation."[4] This was made more specific in 1925.

> The duty of a Deaconess is to teach the unlearned, to instruct youth, to care for the sick, to comfort the afflicted, to supply the wants of the poor and needy and to labor in all ways for the extension of the Church of Christ.[5]

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[1] Mennonite Life, III, 1 (January, 1948), p. 35.

[2] Your Future, (Newton: Board of Christian Service, no date, folder), passim.

[3] Newsletters of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, 1959, 1960, passim.

[4] Const. and Can., 1916, p. 72.

[5] Const. and Can., 1925, p. 82.

In both cases this might be summarized as assistance to the pastor in pastoral work, or as parish work.

A questionnaire answered by 179 deaconesses in 1922 indicated the following distribution of labor: seventy-eight deaconesses in parish work, thirty-six in city institutions (city missions), twenty-five in rural work, sixteen in foreign missions, and four at work with racial minorities.[1]

The canon was revised in 1931 to say:

> The duty of a Deaconess is to teach and especially to assist the Minister in the preparation of candidates for baptism and confirmation; to assist in the administration of Holy Baptism by virtue of her office and in the absence of the priest or deacon to baptize infants; to conduct the Choir office(s); to lead in prayer and when licensed by the Bishop to instruct and preach except in the service of Holy Communion; to care for the sick, the afflicted and the poor and to labor in all ways for the extension of Christ's Church.[2]

The effect of this version, which was much more in the style of the Church of England,[3] was to identify the deaconess much more strongly with the leadership of worship and to assimilate the rights and duties of the deaconess much more closely to those of a deacon. The revision of 1934, retained until the present, broadened the work somewhat more, chiefly to include social work and instruction and counseling in schools and colleges.[1]

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[1] Gen. Conv., Ep. Ch., 1922, p. 676.

[2] Const. and Can., 1931, p. 85.

[3] Cf. Bacon, op. cit., p. 53; The Ministry of Women, Report of the Archbishop's Commission, (Westminster: The Press and Publication Board of the Church Assembly, 1935), pp. 6-7.

In terms of conventional church work categories, the deaconesses have been prepared for parish work, as directors of Christian education, as superintendents of welfare institutions, for settlement house work, for city missions, home missions, foreign missions.[2]

Methodist Deaconesses

The Bethesda Deaconess Association was in respect to its work as well as in other features a continuation of the German deaconess idea. Bethesda Hospital in Cincinnati was the chief training ground as well as the major field of service. Other health and welfare institutions for the care of the aged, children, and others, clustered around it.[3]

In the other deaconess groups in the north, nurse-deaconesses were far from unknown, but were also far fewer. The major area of work was the local church, where the deaconess functioned as a parish worker or pastor's assistant, visiting and evangelizing the needy and assisting in the religious education of the women and children. The next largest area was settlement house work. After that came the various kinds of home mission schools, for Negroes, American Indians, and other disadvantaged groups. A classification of the areas of work of the deaconesses of the northern church was provided by the Board of Hospitals, Homes, and Deaconess Work in 1928.[1] Of 810 active deaconesses, 332 were working in local congregations, 124 in hospitals, 115 in settlement houses, 66 in schools (including deaconess training schools), 34 in church homes, 31 in deaconess homes, 20 in homes for working girls, 10 in rest homes, 8 in homes for aged, and 70 in other areas. A very similar account of the varieties of deaconess work was given in regard to the southern church, with the exception that in the south there was more rural parish work, which was done on a multiple parish or district basis.[2]

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[1] Const. and Can., 1934, p. 87.

[2] Truesdell, The Deaconess Office and Ministry, pp. 29-30.

[3] Methodist Year Book, (New York and Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1918), pp. 176-85.

Under the administration of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, the work of deaconesses has become ever more various, so that it embraces every kind of work done under the auspices of The Methodist Church that does not require full clergy rights

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[1] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1928, p. 1660; also Steiner, _op. cit._, p. 4.

[2] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, pp. 160-61; also _Crown of Service_, pp. 326-27.

(such as administering the Holy Communion). Even the task of being supply pastor (interim pastor) of a local church has been repeatedly assigned to deaconesses.[1] Also included in the current list are such highly professionalized types of work as social case work, social work administration, and college teaching and administration.

The sum of the matter is the formula that was used at the beginning to characterize the scope of the deaconess work:

> The duties of the deaconess are to minister to the poor, visit the sick, pray with the dying, care for the orphan, seek the wandering, comfort the sorrowing, save the sinning, and . . . devote themselves in a general way to such forms of Christian labor as may be suited to their abilities.[2]

It is not competence to do certain specific kinds of professional work, but competence for some kind of professional work plus her relation to the church, as an officer and representative of its concern, that makes her a deaconess.

III. THE EDUCATION OF DEACONESSES

Evangelical and Reformed Deaconesses

In the early years of the period since 1918, when to be an Evangelical deaconess was, with rare exceptions, to be a registered nurse, the education of the deaconess was basically nurse education as approved by the Missouri state board of nurse examiners.[1] It was a four year course at the Deaconess Hospital, of which the equivalent of one half year of class time was devoted to the traditional deaconess subject matter: Bible, doctrine, diaconics, hymnody. Deaconesses who desired to specialize were informed in 1928 that they might do so, if they showed aptitude, after completing the nursing course.[2]

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[1] 21st, WDCS, 1959-60, p. 12, reprint.

[2] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1888, p. 435.

A separate course for "practicial deaconesses" was announced in 1931. Designed for candidates who had had no high school education, it offered two years of deaconess subject matter, general high school education, and practical training in the various hospital departments.[3] The practical course was lengthened to three years in 1934,[4] and to four years in 1937.[5]

As specialization proceeded in the area of hospital services, some deaconesses were sent on to take postgraduate courses in other hospitals, as in obstetrics, in order to qualify as department heads and part-time instructors. Other deaconesses took university courses and degrees, bachelors' and masters', in order to qualify as instructors or as technicians.[1]

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[1] 39th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1928, p. 19. [2] *Ibid*., p. 24.

[3] 41st, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1930, p. 40.

[4] 44th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1933-34, p. 8.

[5] 48th, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1937, p. 11.

As the scientific content of the nursing curriculum expanded, the religious subject matter became somewhat compressed. In 1942 religious instruction took up one class hour per week in each of the four school years.[2] No more was being said at this time about the course in "practical deaconess" work.

The deaconess school was opened to non-deaconess students in 1943. The curriculum was simultaneously reorganized on the standard three year basis. Deaconess and non-deaconess students followed the same curriculum, and one course in religion continued to be taught each semester.[3] As was noted above, with the opening of the school of nursing the flow of deaconess candidates began to come to a halt.

In the deaconess school Announcement of 1953,[4] prospective deaconess candidates were informed that they need not take nurse training at all, but might be prepared for service in other fields, as their aptitudes indicated. But by this time the flow of deaconess candidates had virtually ceased.

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[1] 51st, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1940, p. 7.

[2] 52nd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1941-42, pp. 9-10.

[3] 53rd, Ev. Deac. Soc., 1942-43, pp. 12-15. [4] P. 11.

The action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1959 instituted a major change. Deaconess candidates were now expected to complete their professional education in the health and welfare field before applying for admission to the diaconate. Professional education was defined as follows: "three years [of] college, graduation from an accredited nursing school, or equivalent are considered to be minimal."[1] Following their acceptance as deaconess candidates, prospective deaconesses were to be enrolled in a special training course of two or three months duration, featuring religious subject matter. The course of study, not yet organized in 1959, was to be approved by the Committee on Deaconess Service.[2]

Mennonite Deaconesses

Bethel deaconess nurses began qualifying as registered nurses as soon as Kansas adopted its nurse registration law in 1913.[3] They were being sent on for courses in x-ray and laboratory technology as early as 1911,[4] for a course in public health nursing in 1916,[1] and for courses in orthopedics and pediatrics.[2] Bethel Hospital was one of the first seven in Kansas, in 1921, to employ a full time instructor in nursing.[3] Deaconesses were qualifying for the bachelor's degree at Bethel College in 1943 and 1944.[4]

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[1] E & R Ch., 11th Meeting, 1959, p. 155.

[2] Ibid., pp. 154, 155. [3] ISK, XVI, 3 (May-June, 1958), p. 8.

[4] Silver Anniversary Memorial, pp. 25-27.

The new deaconess program of 1951 spoke of developing a broader educational program for deaconesses, specifying refresher courses, college work looking to the bachelor's degree in all advisable cases, and further diversification of training, to supply deaconesses for all kinds of church work of which there was need.[5] At the time this program remained a wish and a hope.

The current reconstruction of the diaconate speaks in terms of a generation of women in church vocations who will be college graduates and who will take one year at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in addition to whatever other professional training they may require. Women are being admitted to the year at the seminary on the basis of two years of college or of the completion of a vocational curriculum (such as for nursing or technician work), but it is the expressed intention of the committee to encourage all candidates to complete their college work. In college, candidates are advised to minor in Bible and/or Christian education and to major in the areas indicated by their vocational preferences, taking also a course in church vocations such as the committee has been urging upon the Mennonite colleges. Each Mennonite college is also asked to have a faculty person designated as counselor for the students registered with Women in Church Vocations.[1]

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[1] __Ibid__., p. 27. [2] __ISK__, VI, 1 (January, 1947), p. 7.

[3] __ISK__, VI, 8 (October, 1947), p. 8.

[4] __ISK__, II, 6 (June, 1943), p. 13; III, 9 (November, 1944), pp. 4-5.

[5] __ISK__, X, 2 (April, 1951), p. 6.

For the present, candidates are required to participate in at least one summer of an approved service-study program if they are not taking the year at the seminary, and are urged to do so in any case.[2]

There were nine women at various states of preparation in early 1959.[3]

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[1] Women in Church Vocations, pp. 3-4.

[2] Minutes of the Committee on Women in Church Vocations, April 11, 1958, p. 1.

[3] Minutes of the Committee on Church Vocations, Newton, February 6, 1959, p. 1.

Episcopal Deaconesses

Throughout the period under study the canons have required a minimum of two years of special preparation by deaconess candidates. Since 1925 this has meant two years in a church training school following graduation from high school and one school year of supervised field work besides.[1] The actual preparation of deaconesses was well ahead of this requirement: of 179 deaconesses who replied to a questionnaire circulated by the Joint Commission on Deaconesses and reported in 1922, twenty-two were college graduates, twelve had had some college, twelve were normal school graduates, and thirty had had vocational training.[2]

It has not been legislation specifically for deaconesses, but the professionalization of positions in church work, that has continued to advance deaconess education. Two years of graduate study have been required since 1945 of professional women church workers.[3]

In 1925 the canon began to specify the seven subject matter fields in which a deaconess was required to show competence: Bible, church history, missions, doctrine, ministration (deaconess work and parish work and organization), religious education, and social service. The requirement of field work in social service, educational, parish, or mission work was added at this time.[1]

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[1] Const. and Can., 1925, pp. 82-83.

[2] Gen. Conv. Ep. Ch., 1922, p. 676.

[3] The Church A Profession for Women, (New York: National Council, Protestant Episcopal Church, [1946]), pp. 26, 30.

The subject matter areas were reminiscent of those in which deacons had to show proficiency, suggesting that the canon had been modeled on the canon of deacons. The deacon was also examined in liturgics and sermon preparation; he was not examined in social service.[2]

It was indicated above that eight training schools were opened in the enthusiasm that attended the beginning of deaconess work. By 1918 half of these had been closed. The New York Training School (St. Faith's House), founded in 1890 and closed in 1949, is spending its resources on recruitment of deaconess candidates and scholarship assistance.[3] St. Margaret's, begun in 1907 as the Deaconess Training School of the Pacific, describes itself as a graduate school for women in Christian education and offers a two year Master of Arts program. Its last deaconess candidates were graduated in 1943.[1] The Chicago school similarly ceased to be connected with the deaconesses, and the Philadelphia school (founded in 1891) became the women's department of the Philadelphia Divinity School.[2] Thus the Central House for Deaconesses in Evanston, Illinois, is the only deaconess school at present. It arranges for the instruction of candidates at the Seabury-Western (Episcopal) Theological Seminary in Evanston and at other schools.

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[1] Const. and Can., 1925, p. 83.

[2] Yerkes, op. cit., pp. 3-5.

[3] Truesdell, The Deaconess Office and Ministry, p. 27.

Methodist Deaconesses

The Woman's Home Missionary Society began to operate schools for home missionaries, almost as soon as it committed itself to fostering deaconess work, and sent its deaconess candidates to these schools. As in the case of the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions, the training required two school years from the beginning. In 1919 it was announced that the course would require three years of study.[3] There were as many as eight of these training schools in 1919, but with the dwindling of the numbers of applicants in the 1920's they were reduced to four by 1929.[1] Three more were closed or merged with the strongest in the early 1930's;[2] the surviving school, the Kansas City National Training School, became National College, a four year undergraduate college for professional church workers, granting the bachelor's degree, following the unification.

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[1] *Catalogue, St. Margaret's, 1960-61*, Berkeley, California, pp. 9, 13, 31.

[2] Truesdell, *op. cit.*, p. 27; *Episcopal Church Annual*, 1942, p. 133.

[3] 38th, WHMS, 1918-19, p. 173.

The very first Methodist deaconesses in the United States were recruited from among the students of the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions, founded by Lucy Rider Meyer in 1885, and the first Methodist deaconess training in the country was the course of study offered by this school. Since 1934 it has functioned as the women's graduate department of the Garrett Biblical Institute in Evanston, Illinois.[3]

All deaconess education in the northern church was standardized by the General Deaconess Board, which prescribed the required subjects.[4] They were listed in 1928 as Old Testament, New Testament, the Methodist Discipline, church and deaconess history, missions, evangelism and personal work, religious education, local church program, sociology and social service, and supervised field work. At least six semester hours of each were to be taken in the course of two years.[1]

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[1] 48th, WHMS, 1928-29, p. 320.

[2] 59th, WHMS, 1939-40, p. 291.

[3] "Methodist Deaconess Association Training Schools," pp. 1-2.

[4] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1920, p. 655.

The diaconate administered by the Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, required two years of college or the equivalent of applicants in 1918 and then sent them to an "approved church workers' training school" for two years more.[2] The training school of the southern church was Scarritt Bible and Training School in Kansas City, Missouri (since 1924 Scarritt College in Nashville, Tennessee). By the time of the unification deaconess candidates were expected to attend a junior college for two years and then complete work for the bachelor's degree at Scarritt.[3]

Following the unification of The Methodist Church and its diaconate, educational standards for all deaconesses were raised further. By 1951 it was required that the deaconess be a college graduate who had followed a liberal arts curriculum and taken a number of courses in Bible and who also met the professional requirements of her field of service, preferably on the graduate level.[1] National College and Scarritt College continued to be the preferred training schools, the former as a four year undergraduate college, the latter as a "senior college" (no offerings below the junior year) and graduate school. Theological seminaries were also used selectively for deaconess education.

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[1] Gen. Conf. M. E. Ch., 1928, p. 1657.

[2] 8th, WMC, 1917-18, pp. 379-380.

[3] Crown of Service, p. 324.

Of the 278 deaconesses commissioned since 1940, no fewer than 128 have earned the Master of Arts degree.[2]

A long-standing concern to help the deaconesses to continue studying and learning through reading courses has been continued into the present time. It is being supplemented currently by a series of workshops for in-service training of deaconesses in such areas as American government, United Nations affairs, and the like.[3]

The concern is to prepare women for any kind of work the church may have for anyone to do that does not require full clergy rights.

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[1] 11th, WDCS, 1950-51, p. 136.

[2] 21st, WDCS, 1959-60, p. 12, reprint. [3] *Ibid*., p. 4.

PART V

CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER XXI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Consideration of the conclusions that may be drawn from the study waits now on a summary of the findings. The summary is constructed on the pattern that has been used throughout for the analysis of deaconess work.

I. SUMMARY

Recruitment Procedures

Recruitment is the first of the headings under which the conception of the deaconess has been examined. Recruitment has also been seen to be a major problem of every diaconate studied. The figures on deaconess population show that only the diaconate of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod has been able to show any net gains in recent years. Deaconesses have for some time been a small minority of the women in full-time service of the churches and their concerns.

There have been three lines of response to the problem of recruitment: (1) efforts to interest candidates directly have been originated or increased; (2) attempts have been made to make the diaconate more attractive to women by modernizing it; and (3) arrangements have been made to transfer responsibility for the diaconate to the organized church.

The first type of response has been made by every one of the "lively" diaconates, that is, the five Lutheran diaconates in which the conception of the deaconess has had some development and the four other Protestant diaconates. It is unfortunately impossible to assess the relative quantity and quality of effort made along this line by each of the nine diaconates. Nevertheless the devices employed in various combinations by one or more of the diaconates are in the record. They include the following: deploying deaconesses as field workers to present the deaconess vocation to youth and women's groups in churches, conducting vocational conferences at colleges, seminaries, and deaconess schools, publishing newsletters and other periodicals, preparing stories on deaconess work for the church press, having deaconess Sundays in supporting churches, reporting to church conventions, circulating folders, pamphlets, filmstrips, and motion pictures, bringing church youth and women's groups to the deaconess school, and the like.

The second type of response, modernizing the diaconate, has been made in varying degrees by the nine diaconates being reviewed. The results will be summarized under the remaining headings in terms of which the conception of the deaconess has been studied.

The third type of response, taking steps to transfer responsibility for the diaconate from a voluntary society or self-perpetuating board of trustees within the church membership to the church itself, will be examined under the rubric "The Relationship of the Diaconate to the Church."

Investiture and Probation

All the Lutheran diaconates but one, that of the American Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, have dropped the terms "probation" and "probationer" and have substituted modern equivalents such as "deaconess candidate" and "deaconess student." With the sharp decline in the use of the garb, investiture, which was the beginning of wearing the garb as well as admission to the lower level of the diaconate, has disappeared from all but the American Lutheran and United Lutheran diaconates.

The term "probation" and the rite of investiture have also been dropped by the Evangelical and Reformed and the Mennonite deaconess work. Investiture is part of her admission to the full diaconate of women for the Episcopal deaconess; the prospective deaconess is a "candidate" for two years. The Methodist female diaconate has no investiture; the prospective Methodist deaconess is a candidate for one year after completing her professional training.

Consecration and the Relation of the Deaconess to the Church

In three of the Lutheran diaconates (the United Lutheran, American Lutheran, and Missouri Lutheran), consecration has remained essentially what it was in 1918: the act of a private corporation within the church membership, performed in a churchly setting. In two others, the diaconates of the Augustana Lutheran and Evangelical Lutheran churches, consecration has latterly been performed by the president of the national church body as a sign of the role of the deaconess as a servant of the whole church.

In two other Protestant churches, the Evangelical and Reformed and the Mennonite, the deaconess is now commissioned by the church and becomes a kind of staff officer of the church. In The Methodist Church this kind of relationship has been strengthened since 1952. In the Episcopal Church the deaconess has been admitted to a special (though still lay) status by the bishop since before 1918.

In four of these churches, the Augustana and Evangelical Lutheran, the Evangelical and Reformed, and the Mennonite, the local board that had administered deaconess work not only knew that the diaconate was losing ground, but also felt that it had hold of something sacred that it dared not let die on its hands. When appeals were made to the church, the church in each case confirmed the view that it had a stake in the matter; it did so implicitly by accepting responsibility for the diaconate and explicitly by performing the consecration and making the deaconess more or less a staff officer of the church.

The predominant tendency here is toward a more formal ecclesiastical status for the deaconess.

Vows

An outstanding trait of all the older diaconates was the insistence that deaconesses be celibate. Two Lutheran diaconates (those of the Augustana and Missouri churches) and three other Protestant diaconates (the Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, and Methodist) have admitted marriage as an option that does not destroy the deaconess relationship.

Remuneration

The allowance system characterized all the female diaconates but the Episcopal in 1918. Every diaconate but that of the American Lutheran Church has now made the salary at least a deaconess option. In some the salary is a standard and required item for all deaconesses.

Garb or Uniform and Title

The garb was mandatory for all deaconesses in the United States in 1918. Besides repeated attempts to modernize the garb, all but two diaconates (the American Lutheran and the Episcopal) have made it optional for the deaconess.

The title "Sister," used both in direct address and in the third person, was common to all the strongly Kaiserswerthian diaconates of women in 1918 except that of the Missouri Synod. It was not used in the Episcopal and Methodist deaconess work. Now it has been given up in the Evangelical Lutheran, Evangelical and Reformed, and Mennoaite diaconates and is in some disfavor in the Augustana diaconate.

The Role of the Motherhouse

The motherhouse was common to all the Kaiserswerthian diaconates in 1918, that is, to all but the Episcopal and the major Methodist deaconess groups. It has been made optional or given up altogether for future deaconesses by all but the diaconate of the American Lutheran Church. The responsibility for placement has been transferred to other forms of diaconate administration.

The Role of the Sisterhood

As a consequence of the decline of the motherhouse, the deaconesses have developed other means of fostering fellowship among themselves, such as deaconess conferences that meet annually or more often.

There has been a tendency in every diaconate for the sisterhood or deaconess conference to be an instrument for achieving more democratic process within the diaconate. Meetings of deaconesses have provided opportunities to form and to forward to administrations suggestions and recommendations. Occasions emerged to elect deaconess representatives to administrative boards. Thus the deaconess group and individual deaconesses have risen to new authority within the diaconates. One practical consequence is that every deaconess enjoys far more self-determination than formerly in respect to her placement.

In the case of every rubric reviewed, a majority of the diaconates have moved away from the older conception of the deaconess toward a conception more in keeping with modern women's work. The record is replete with indications that the governing factor in all these changes was concern for improving deaconess recruitment.

The Relation of the Diaconate to the Church, Its Government, and Means of Support

There has been a gain of relatedness to the organized church on the part of all the diaconates except the Episcopal and Methodist diaconates of women, which already enjoyed in 1918 a relationship that was fully articulated in canon law. The Philadelphia motherhouse became a direct responsibility of the United Lutheran Church. The Milwaukee motherhouse was publicly claimed as an agency of the American Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Deaconess Association became the beneficiary of a large fund collected by the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod and developed an advisory board of church executives. The diaconates of the Augustana Lutheran and Evangelical Lutheran churches became direct concerns of their churches in the proceedings which led to their being reorganized. It was under similar circumstances that the Evangelical and Reformed and the Mennonite diaconates became the direct responsibilities of their churches.

In the case of the United Lutheran Church it was indicated to be the financial difficulties of the motherhouse that prompted the closer relation to the church. In the case of the Augustana, Evangelical Lutheran, Evangelical and Reformed, and Mennonite diaconates, it was the problem of recruitment and more deeply the problem of the diaconates' continued viability that led to the closer ties to the church.

The Work of the Deaconesses

Two tendencies have marked the history of the work of deaconesses since 1918 in all the diaconates: (1) never concentrated in one vocational area, deaconess work has become even more diversified; (2) it has become more professional.

The increasing diversity of the work of deaconesses has resulted in large part from expanding technology and the emergence of new vocations such as dietitian, x-ray technician, laboratory technician, physical therapist, occupational therapist, etc., within the hospital and other health and welfare institutions with which many deaconesses were connected. Deaconess work has also become more diverse by accommodating the preferences of deaconesses for a variety of parish, missionary, educational, and social work positions. The Methodist deaconesses have led the way in this diversification, along with the Episcopal deaconesses; the Mennonites are following suit. The Evangelical and Reformed deaconesses are now limited by church resolution to the health and welfare professions. The Missouri Lutheran deaconesses emphasize parish work without limiting themselves to it. The Methodist deaconesses, originally mostly in parish work, have access to the full range of church-related activities open to persons without full clergy status.

The higher professional level of current deaconess work results from the fact that fields in which deaconesses were most active in 1918 are fields that have been generally professionalized in the United States in the years since 1918. Nursing, social work, and religious educational work have themselves been characterized above all else in these decades by increasing professionalization.

Deaconess Education, and Admission Requirements

The central tendency in all changes in deaconess education since 1918 has been toward more education for the deaconess and specifically toward sufficient education for professional accreditation. At one stage all candidates for nursing deaconess work were required to be high school graduates. At another stage deaconess nursing instructors and hospital department heads were required to be college graduates, and then holders of masters' degrees. In another area deaconess social workers were required first to become college graduates and then holders of masters' degrees. Deaconess teachers and parish workers have been under similar necessities, particularly in the Episcopal and Methodist churches. Professional standards have been erected in all the fields of deaconess labors; the deaconesses have met the new professional standards gladly, but also on pain of having to withdraw from their work if they did not. This has been true in all nine diaconates being reviewed. In several, professional preparation has also been made mandatory by church legislation: the Augustana Lutheran, Evangelical Lutheran, Evangelical and Reformed, Mennonite, and Methodist diaconates.

Admission policies have been of two kinds: admission in the Kaiserswerthian diaconates meant admission to deaconess training, first as a novice and then as a probationer. In other instances (Episcopal and Methodist deaconess work), it has meant admission to the status of graduate deaconess. In both kinds of situation admission policy has necessarily kept pace with the professionalization of educational requirements. The deaconess programs that admit students have had to require that candidates be admissible to college or be college students (United Lutheran, Missouri Lutheran). Those that admit graduate deaconesses have had to require college and/or professional accreditation for admission (the Augustana Lutheran, Evangelical Lutheran, Evangelical and Reformed, Episcopal, and Methodist diaconates of women). The Mennonite program is moving in this direction. In the American Lutheran motherhouse in Milwaukee non-professional and semi-professional deaconesses are still provided for along with professional.

II. SUMMARY IN TERMS OF THE PROBLEMS

On the basis of the foregoing summary it is clear that there have been just two problems facing the deaconess enterprise in the United States since 1918 that have been acknowledged by the administrators of deaconess programs in the course of their efforts to solve them. One is recruitment of deaconess candidates. The other is enabling the deaconesses to continue to qualify for positions of leadership. The problem of retaining recruits in the deaconess ranks can be viewed as an aspect of the problem of recruitment and will be so considered here.

These two problems correspond to two sets of changed circumstances that have overtaken the deaconess movement in the period since 1918. The problem of recruitment (and of retention of recruits) is connected with the changes that have occurred in the area of women's work. For one thing, as women entered more and more fields of employment outside the home, beginning particularly with the manpower draft incident to the first world war, and as they continued to take up work outside the home in larger numbers, the diaconates faced more and more competition for a share of the available womanpower.

In addition, the entrance of large numbers of women into the American work force modified many attitudes held by women and directed toward women as workers. Women made some gains of independence, for example, through acquiring incomes of their own by working. They also began to work their way up in the ranks in many enterprises, as well as to qualify for higher positions through superior education. Woman executives, woman managers, woman board members have become as familiar as woman voters. This introduced a factor into the competition for womanpower in respect to which the deaconess work was peculiarly vulnerable, for it was embodied in an early nineteenth century form that had not yet learned to make any concessions to the modern woman.

The deaconess enterprise happened to be launched in Germany in 1836, when the "subjection of women" had not yet been challenged. Without unkindness and without self-consciousness, it drew its recruits into a severely regimented community in which they continued to be as children in the home. They were asked to be obedient; they were directed into their assignments. They were often consulted in advance, but the motherhouse climate was not one that encouraged independence of judgment.

Many features of deaconess life as it used to be exemplify this regimentation. Deaconesses were required to wear the garb, for instance. It was conventional middle class wear when it was first put on, and it was economical from the administrative viewpoint, but by making it from the same patterns for generations the motherhouse allowed it to become grotesque and a discouragement or a burden to young women.

The economic cooperative was equally utilitarian at the start: from the administrative standpoint it too was economical, making the alms reach further and capitalizing the expansion of the hospital capacity, and it could be put to the deaconesses appealingly, because it made them a community of sacrifice, but compulsory sacrifice could not appeal as widely in this century as the notion of having money in the pocket-book and deciding for oneself how it would be distributed.

The discouragement of marriage was initially utilitarian. As a motherhouse administrator one simply could not afford to lose one's workers as rapidly as they were trained. It is obvious that marriage took them permanently out of motherhouse service. But there were always women who did not marry -- these were the ones wanted. There was no theological or ascetic preference for celibacy involved here, for there was no basis for any such thing in Lutheran -- or in Protestant -- thought. On the other hand the whole approach became anachronous in an age when woman could find work that satisfied their motivation to service and that also could be dropped for marriage at any time without guilt or retained in marriage.

Thus a whole motherhouse scheme (garb, economic cooperative, celibacy) that had been practical and efficient in respect to the organization of deaconess work in the nineteenth century was through the change of cultural circumstances rendered offensive. Women were not aspiring to that kind of regimentation.

The problem that the diaconates had with regard to recruitment was compounded by the fact that there were many pastors in the leadership of the deaconess movement who had made a cult of the Kaiserswerth tradition: Fliedner had been successful; Loehe had had to give in and adopt the motherhouse pattern, too; ergo, the motherhouse was the only way to organize deaconess work. One of them laid it down at the beginning of the century that there should not even be any experimenting. They made it an article of faith that Fliedner had been vouchsafed a universal formula, and they were slow to admit that women in twentieth century America were at all different from women in nineteenth century Germany. They even took pride in the negative recruitment value of the motherhouse system, considering it a providential arrangement that screened out all but the most sincere candidates. It was also a favorite theme of those who had made a cult of the motherhouse that what was really defeating them in the search for deaconess candidates was the increasing "materialism" of the age. The pastors set the pace, but the deaconesses learned to talk this way too.

What has been said was only slightly less true of the Methodist and Episcopal diaconates of women; although they broke with the motherhouse pattern at the very beginning, they did not succeed in dispelling the aura of imposed sacrifice within which the deaconess work was seen. The garb and the requirement of celibacy persisted. The deaconess home might be as regimented as the motherhouse. The salaries (where they occurred) could rival the allowances for meagerness. The memory remains of the non-deaconess woman board member of fairly recent years who fought determinedly against introducing salaries for deaconesses, on the ground that that would take the sacrifice out of deaconess work.

To this acute recruitment problem there were two major types of solution offered. One was the channeling of energy into deliberate efforts to publicize the diaconate and interest candidates; the other was the attempt to make the life and work of the deaconess more attractive. The former kind of activity was characterized above; the latter may be summarized as follows. (It operated on a wide front; there was a wide front to operate on.)

In the first place, this kind of reform had to wait until those who had made a cult of venerating Fliedner's principles or the notion of imposed sacrifice had passed from their positions of dominance in the diaconates.

Second, it was possible to do something to make the deaconess work more attractive through the introduction of more democratic process into the motherhouse or other deaconess routines, removing the legacy of paternalism received from nineteenth century deaconess work. When deaconesses were given access to their board of directors through their sisters' council, or representation in their hospital administration, or in the policy-making diaconate board, when deaconesses were made chief executive officers of motherhouse boards, or diaconate boards, or hospitals, a new dignity was given to deaconess work and to deaconess personnel in general. Further, it can be said that it was given deliberately, to honor deaconesses who had proved their ability and mettle.

Third, there have been efforts the central tendency of which is to slough off all the former distinguishing marks of the female diaconate: celibacy, the economic cooperative, the garb, the title. It was characteristic of all the American diaconates in 1918 to consider these indispensable, whether for practical or traditional reasons, and therefore as part of the essence of the diaconate of women. In the modern era, however, they have appeared first to be burdens, then to be external and accidental, and finally to be expendable. However desirable they still seemed to some, it became clearer in the era since 1918 that they were keeping away applicants without whom there would be no diaconate at all.

Fourth, in some instances the deaconess has been given a more substantial churchly office and status as part of an effort to honor the deaconess and enhance her position and the appreciation of her work in the church. This has occurred in the Methodist, Mennonite, Evangelical and Reformed, Augustana Lutheran, and Evangelical Lutheran churches.

Fifth, elevation of the academic requirements for becoming a deaconess, to be discussed below, has also seemed to many to make the female diaconate more attractive, both intrinsically and through making the work of the deaconess more significant.

Deaconesses Continuing to Qualify as Leaders

The other major problem faced by the diaconate administrations was that of enabling the deaconesses to continue to qualify for positions of leadership. The towering fact here is that it is precisely the lines of work that the deaconesses had had laid out for them in the early nineteenth century that developed in the direction of professions in the early twentieth century: nursing, social work, and teaching (parish work was a combination of all three).

The deaconesses were already in charge of hospitals, schools of nursing, hospital departments, and all kinds of health and welfare institutions when the professionalization began. Like others in similar positions, they took pride in keeping up with the new standards of education for their positions. Their administrations took the same kind of pride in helping them to do it. In the background there was also the fact that the churches and clienteles they served would in the long run require them to meet the new standards or be replaced.

There was another aspect to this. The deaconesses had no income or savings of their own, generally, with which to finance further education. They had bartered away their lifetime earnings to the motherhouse for lifetime care plus a little pocket money. Therefore it was the responsibility of the motherhouse or other diaconate administration to find the way to finance the additional education. There is no question of the willingness of the administrations to do this, and it has been indicated in previous chapters that it was frequently done, but it was done with some strain, as something that had not been counted on and budgeted for when the deaconess idea was first set in motion.

The earliest type of solution to the problem of advancing deaconess educational standing, that of the Methodist Episcopal

Church, South, was to require of deaconess candidates that they complete at least two years of college before applying. The solution of other churches in the earliest period was to send selected deaconesses to college or professional school or both, as it was required, to enable them to keep their positions of leadership as nursing instructors, supervisors, teachers, and the like. In some cases the expense could be borne by the diaconate, particularly if it was in possession of a thriving hospital (Evangelical and Reformed, American Lutheran, Mennonite motherhouses). In other cases the investment in education was made by the diaconate administration with the help of church subsidies (Methodist, United Lutheran diaconates). In still other cases the burden remained with the individual deaconess. However when deaconesses required two or more years of undergraduate education in order to qualify for two or more years of graduate education in social work or nurse education, at the expense of the diaconate, the costs came high. This led to putting the deaconess education itself on the undergraduate level, the individual student regularly taking a part of the cost over and above the scholarships that were made available, so that every full-fledged deaconess was ready for graduate education as required.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was by far the earliest to make this move, with two years of college and two years of college level professional instruction required for all deaconesses as early as 1918. The Missouri Lutheran and United Lutheran deaconess programs introduced similar requirements in the mid-1940's, the United Lutheran program being a five-year baccalaureate curriculum. Admission standards were raised accordingly.

The Methodist diaconate of women again led the way to the latest kind of requirement (1951): that every deaconess be a college graduate who has taken professional preparation in addition, preferably on the graduate level. Deaconess nurses are exceptions, but social workers, teachers, directors of religious education, parish workers, college counselors, specialists in church music and church drama, and foreign missionaries are expected to take their masters' degrees, usually at Scarritt College. Seminary and university work are sometimes integrated into the curriculum.

Other churches, following a similar tendency, are asking deaconess candidates to take their bachelors' degrees plus more or less deaconess instruction, and graduate education as needed. The Mennonite program requires one year at one of the church's theological seminaries, although it is temporarily admitting women to this study with a minimum of two years of college. The Evangelical and Reformed Church requires two or three months of deaconess instruction after college or professional training. The Evangelical Lutheran Church requires six weeks at seminary during the summer, after graduation from college or completion of professional education. The Augustana Lutheran Church insists that all deaconess candidates secure professional accreditation in their fields. The American Lutheran motherhouse provides professional education, but does not require all deaconesses to take it. The Missouri Lutheran and United Lutheran diaconates arrange graduate education for selected deaconesses after the five year baccalaureate program both groups now operate.

The evidence is that the diaconates provided more and more professional education for the deaconesses and that the deaconesses have increasingly been recognized as professional workers.

III. THE HYPOTHESIS

One task that remains is the testing of the hypothesis. The hypothesis is: "That the tendency of the changes made in the female diaconate in the United States since 1918 is toward professionalizing deaconess work." Since the hypothesis was stated in terms of a tendency underlying the changes made in the diaconates, the question rises, can any one or any dominant tendency be discerned.

From one standpoint it may be said that the tendency present in all the changes made in all the diaconates of women since 1918 is the tendency to keep the female diaconate viable in a recognizable form. It is this tendency that accepted the challenges raised against the female diaconate of 1918 by changed cultural circumstances and struggled to solve the problems involved by making changes in the conception of deaconess work. The tendency so described, however, is merely a manifestation of the will to survive and reveals nothing of the character of the changes made.

A second order of tendencies, prompted by the tendency to survive and expressing themselves in the characteristic types of changes made for the sake of survival, consists of the following: the tendencies of the diaconates (1) to develop direct recruitment procedures, (2) to eliminate from the diaconates non-essential features with negative recruitment value, (3) to professionalize deaconess work, and (4) to develop closer relationships between the diaconates and their churches.

The tendency to keep the female diaconate viable in recognizable form is not universal among the cases studied, but it is widespread. It was present in some diaconates that seem doomed to disappear; it was absent from others in which the office of deaconess was considered a means to an end that had been superseded by more modern means. The most remarkable manifestation of the tendency has been in the official church bodies that have showed a new sense of church responsibility for the welfare of the female diaconate when it appeared to be in danger.

The tendency to put more effort into direct recruitment has been discussed above; its connection with diaconate survival is obvious.

The tendency to eliminate from the diaconates features with negative recruitment value, like the allowance system, may have been delayed longer than was necessary or wise by the notion that these features were of the essence of the diaconate and that to remove them would be to fail to preserve the diaconate in recognizable form. The diaconates' judgment in the long run has evidently been to the effect that not these externals but works of helpfulness done in the spirit of neighborly love to the glory of God are the ideal marks of the deaconess.

The tendency to professionalize deaconess work was made necessary if the deaconesses were to continue in fields of work that were being professionalized. To refuse to become professionalized would have meant being required to leave areas of work that were not only traditional, but of foremost concern to the churches. To have confined themselves to non-professional work would have meant to the deaconesses and to the diaconate administrations that they had failed to preserve a recognizable female diaconate.

The tendency to develop closer ties with the churches was prompted by the diaconates' problem of recruitment, their desire for guidance in eliminating non-essential features of deaconess work, and their financial needs in view of the costs of collegiate and professional deaconess education.

When the hypothesis was proposed, it was stated that there were two ways in which deaconess work might have become professionalized. One way was for a distinctive kind of work performed by deaconesses to achieve professional status. The other was for deaconesses regularly to become members of one or more of the established professions.

None of the evidence accumulated in the course of the present study indicates that anything has come of the former possibility. There has been no distinctive kind of work referred to by the term "deaconess work." If one were to propose such a verb as "to deaconess," it could only mean "to serve, to be useful."

The evidence of the study has indicated that deaconesses have been engaged in a variety of kinds of useful work, every type of which they have shared with other workers who were not deaconesses. The major broad classifications of this work are nursing, social work, and teaching. It is a familiar story that the occupations falling within all three of these classifications have been considerably professionalized in the years since 1918. The evidence provided by this study indicates that the deaconesses have gone along with their occupational groups and have become professionalized too.

The hypothesis has therefore been confirmed in a modified form: one major tendency of the changes made in the female diaconate in the United States since 1918 has been toward professionalizing deaconess work. That is, one major tendency of the changes made in deaconess work in these years has been to the effect that the deaconesses, by maintaining or earning places for themselves in the professions of nursing, social work, and teaching, have necessarily become professionalized in the same degree as their fellow-members of these occupational groups. The hypothesis has not been confirmed in its original form, for the tendency to professionalize deaconess work has not been the (only) tendency of the changes made in the female diaconate in the United States since 1918.

IV. THE FUTURE OF DEACONESS WORK IN THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

A final task remains: it is to indicate the solutions of recognized problems and responses to changed circumstances that seem to hold promise for the future of deaconess work in the United Lutheran Church in America. The changes that have been made in deaconess work have already been reported. The problems they have been designed to solve have been indicated. What has been the relative effectiveness of the changes made, and what has been their relative appropriateness?

The question of the relative effectiveness of the various changes as solutions of problems turns out to be difficult to answer for several reasons. One is that the communication among the American diaconates is excellent, and they have freely exchanged ideas. No one would want it otherwise, but it has been one consequence of this that there is no great amount of divergency among the solutions tried except in timing. Almost all the diaconates have largely discarded the elements of deaconess life with negative recruitment value; all have been studying the techniques of recruitment. All have advanced the educational requirements for deaconess work.

Another difficulty is that the quantitative data available are not of the kind that can support precise readings. Too many variables related to recruitment and to the deaconess enrolments are not represented in the data that exist. Also, diaconates have not had time to get significant results from changes made in 1954 (Mennonite, Evangelical Lutheran), 1958 (Augustana Lutheran), and 1959 (Evangelical and Reformed).

However, certain non-precise judgments about the effectiveness of recruitment efforts appear to be reasonable. One is that all diaconates that are at all vigorous today are diaconates that have made changes either to strengthen their direct efforts at recruitment or to eliminate features of deaconess life with negative recruitment value. The three diaconates that are most vigorous (the Methodist, Missouri Lutheran, and United Lutheran) have made changes of both kinds long enough ago so that positive results have had time to be visible, and they are visible.

A further suggestion made by the evidence in this: That, since just one deaconess enterprise is growing rapidly (that of the Missouri Lutherans), everything distinctive that it has done should be reviewed by recruitment committees. It may be significant, for example, that besides adopting all the recruitment procedures that any diaconate has employed and abandoning all the hallmarks of Kaiserswerth, the Lutheran Deaconess Association has the distinction of being the one deaconess movement that has relocated its training center on the campus of a church-related university.

The diaconate of the United Lutheran Church has been energetic in direct recruitment efforts. It has not yet gone as far as the Methodist or Missouri Lutheran diaconates in modernizing the conception of the deaconess, particularly in that it has retained the idea of celibate deaconesses. The experience of the Methodist and Missouri Lutheran diaconates should suggest to the United Lutheran Church that it has nothing to fear from dropping the requirement of deaconess celibacy. Considering the accidental and religiously non-significant nature of the garb, the allowance system, the title "Sister," and deaconess celibacy as aspects originally of the authoritarian nineteenth century motherhouse, it seems appropriate to dispose of all these externalities deliberately and thoroughly.

The other major problem besides recruitment that was worked on by all the diaconates was the problem of enabling the deaconesses to continue to qualify for positions of leadership.

The evidence relating to this problem has been summarized above.[1] A strong current has been running in all the diaconates that are endeavoring to survive -- the tendency of which is for all work done by deaconesses to become established as professional work. Thus the changes made in this area have on the whole been effective.

There can be no question of the appropriateness of the tendency to professionalize deaconess work. It was more than appropriate; it was an absolute necessity if deaconess work was to maintain itself.

Furthermore, representing as it does essentially the integration of a body of higher learning with its practice, the professionalization of an occupation must mean a gain in its usefulness to the public it serves. From the standpoint of an occupation like deaconess work, which exists to be useful, such a development could only mean a gain of adequacy in fulfilling its very reason for existence.

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[1] Pp. 447-451.

Assuming that professional service is generally bound to be better in any area than non-professional, since it enriches practice with the resources of higher learning, it may also be suggested that not only the deaconesses and their administrations but the churches to which they belonged were bound to find the professionalization of deaconess work to their liking.

It is impossible to write of the professionalization of deaconess work without recalling words of Margaret Mead's that summon a different aspect of professionalization from the one that has been in view thus far:

> This whole trend towards the professionalization of service fields means a shift from an occupation to which one gives oneself -- as a woman still does in marriage and motherhood -- to an occupation to which one gives definite hours and limited duties. . . . This whole shift is part of the assimilation of female ideal and male ideal to each other.[1]

One has to shrink from the vision of deaconesses become cold-eyed mercenaries, ready at five o'clock to walk away from the patient queue of the helpless. But at the same time one may recollect that by letting themselves be prompted to proclaim their readiness for self-sacrifice at the very beginning of a lifetime of work and leaving themselves almost no possibility of ever saying no without guilt to the demand for service, the deaconesses exposed themselves to exploitation. They were paid in fine words for years by male spokesmen for the diaconate who could not themselves have stood the constant expectation of humility, but who thought it was natural that women should. It seems better that the roles of male and female should be assimilated to each other, and that the tribute should be granted to women as well as to men that they may be able to accept the outward protection of limited hours and specified duties and still "give themselves" in real neighborly concern.

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[1] Margaret Mead, Male and Female (New York: Mentor Books, 1949, 1955), pp. 226-27.

It has sometimes been charged that when the consecrated deaconess gave way to the "secularized" nurse and social worker, mercenariness entered the holy place. In the shadow of this judgment, some may be led to fear that the properly paid deaconess will necessarily become unsympathetic. The answer to this is: (1) it is not necessarily so, and (2) it is precisely here, in not becoming insensitive rather than in going unnecessarily hungry, that the deaconess may have her modern vocation and may set an example to the rest of her profession. In doing her work out of a heart full of love and gratitude to God she will have all the continuity she should have with the best of her deaconess forebears.

If it may be thought then that the tendency to professionalize deaconess work is one in which the deaconess administration of the United Lutheran Church in America had every right to be encouraged, the only question that remains is whether the professionalization has been carried as far as it ought to have been. The example of The Methodist Church suggests that it could be carried further.

History also suggests that the academic requirements for professional work and professional recognition are likely to become more rather than less. Professions like medicine, which once permitted professional training to begin after two or three years of college, have almost entirely abandoned that practice in favor of making professional training a postgraduate affair. Newer professions like nursing seem to be moving away from granting professional recognition to persons who do not hold baccalaureate degrees. The result is likely to be that eventually all kinds of admittedly professional standing will presuppose graduate education and graduate degrees. A deaconess training program that intends to lead again, as deaconesses once did, and not only follow, must consider whether all full-fledged deaconesses ought not also to have achieved graduate degrees.

This is no more than the Board of Deaconess Work of the United Lutheran Church had in view in 1944, when it urged that the deaconess schools of the church become graduate schools.

It would seem that the proposal might very well be renewed.

One more development in deaconess work that has been described in the study may be recommended to the diaconate of the United Lutheran Church as showing promise for the future; that is the recently renewed tendency of sponsoring churches to define the office of the deaconess as an office of the church, rather than of a voluntary association of church members. Deaconesses have had this kind of relationship to the Methodist and Episcopal churches from the beginning. The churchly recognition of the deaconess has been carried further in the recent action of The Methodist Church (1952) and inaugurated in the Mennonite Church (1954), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (1954), the Augustana Lutheran Church (1958), and the Evangelical and Reformed Church (1959).

There are two reasons for the United Lutheran Church to make the office of deaconess an office of the church: (1) Honor, recognition, and status would be granted to deaconesses in a more appropriate measure than at present. This would be a fitting recognition of the "ministry of mercy," regarded as an essential ministry of the church although not on the same level as the "ministry of the Word." It would also be in keeping with the honor due to women professional workers for (ministers of) the church, which ought to be not less in kind than the honor now accorded to the male ministers of the church -- the clergy.

(2) Recognition as officers of the church would mean to the diaconate the possibility of greater resources of money, prestige, and power with which to make the advance in training and usefulness that it desires to make, as the experience of the Methodist deaconess work suggests. The money and power would be more likely to be available because the prestige of the church would be more closely identified with deaconesses who were staff officers -- or better, ministers (which is what the word "deaconesses" says) -- as the clergy are, of the church itself.

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